OUCHED BY AN ANGEL: GATTI RUNS OUT OF MIRACLES AGAINST MANFREDY

THE RING

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"The Bible Of Boxing"

WRESTLING WITH HIS REINSTATEMENT

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MAY 1998

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CRUISERWEIGHT Ch: James Toney 1-Fabrice Tiozzo 2-Marcelo Dominquez 3-Imamu Mayfield 4-Nate Miller 5-Robert Daniels 6-Uriah Grant 7-Don Diego Poeder 8-Kenny Murphy 9-Kenny Keene 10-Tiwon Taylor

LT. HEAVYWEIGHT Ch: Drake Thadzi 1-Roy Jones Jr. 2-Dariusz Michalczewski 3-Montell Griffin 4-William Guthrie 5-Fredrik Alvarez 6-Lou Del Valle 7-Virgil Hill 8-Jose Luis Rivera 9-Chris Eubank 10-Michael Nunn

SP.MIDDLEWEIGHT Ch: Mads Larsen 1-Frank Liles 2- Robin Reid 3-Joe Calzaghe 4-Anwar Oshana 5-Roberto Duran 6-Charles Brewer 7-Thomas Tate 8-Herol Graham 9-Jorge Castro 10-Omar Sheika

MIDDLEWEIGHT Ch: Freeman Barr 1-Bernard Hopkins 2-Julio Cesar Green 3-Keith Holmes 4-Dana Rosenblatt 5-William Joppy 6-Rual Frank 7David Reid 8-Quincy Taylor 9-Lonnie Bradley 10-Jerry Brown

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Felix Trinidad 2-Laurent Boudaouani 3-Winky Wright 4-Kieth Mullings 5-Yory Boy Campas 6-Julio Cesar Vasquez 7-Raul Marquez 8-Hector Camacho 9-Terry Norris 10-Anthony Stephens

WELTERWEIGHT Ch: Jose Rivera 1-Felix Trinidad 2-Oscar De La Hoya 3-Ike Quartey 4-Pernell Whitaker 5-Jose Luis Lopez 6-Vernon Forrest 7-Michael Loewe 8-Patrick Charpentier 9-Fernando Vargas 10-Oba Carr

JR. WELTERWEIGHT Ch: Johar Lashin 1-Vince Phillips 2-Miquel Angel Gonzalez 3-Khalid Rahilou 4-Kostya Tszyu 5-Frankie Randell 6-Julio Cesar Chavez 7-Paul Nave 8-Alfonso Sanchez 9-Hector Lopez 10-Zeb Judah

LIGHTWEIGHT Ch: Tony Pep 1-Orzubek Nazarov 2-Shane Mosley 3-Steve Johnston 4-Phillip Holiday 5-George Scott 6-Lamar Murphy 7-Jean Baptist Mendy 8-John John Molina 9-Marco Rudolph 10-Billy Irwin

JR. LIGHTWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Arturo Gatti 2-Genaro Hernandez 3-Yong Soo Choi 4-Angel Manfredy 5-Joel Casamayor 6-Azumah Nelson 7-Arnulfo Castillo 8-Julien Lorcy 9-Dennis Holbaek 10-Ramon Ledon

FEATHERWEIGHT Ch: Radford Beasley 1-Naseem Hamed 2-Luisito Espinosa 3-Wilfredo Vasquez 4-Tom Johnson 5-Franciso Segura 6-David Toledo 7-Alejandro Gonzalez 8-Kevin Kelly 9-Orlando Canizales 10-Welcome Ncita

JR. FEATHERWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Junior Jones 2-Vuyani Bungu 3-Antonio Cermino 4-Erik Morales 5-Marco Antonio Barrera 6-Wayne McCullough 7-Kennedy McKinney 8-Daniel Zaragoza 9-Rico Siodora 10-Lehlohonolo Ledwaba

BANTAMWEIGHT Ch: Johnny Bredahl 1-Tim Austin 2-Robbie Regan 3-Nana Konadu 4-Daorung Siriwat 5-Jorge Julio 6-Joichiro Tatsuyoshi 7-Paulie Ayala 8-Mbulelo Botile 9-Veeraphol Sahaprom 10-Patrick Quka

JR. BANTAMWEIGHT Ch: Vacant 1-Johnny Tapia 2-Gerry Penalosa 3-Yokthai Sith Oar 4-Katsuya Onizuka 5-Luis Bolanos 6-Ratanchai Sor Voraphin 7-Abbey Mnisi 8-Danny Romero 9-Hiroshi Kawashima 10-Harold Grey

FLYWEIGHT Ch: Scotty Olson 1-Chatchai Sasakul 2-Mark Johnson 3-Jesus Zuniga 4-Jose Bonilla 5-David Guerault 6-Carlos Salazar 7-Saen Sow Pleonchit 8-Yuri Arbachakov 9-Arthur Johnson 10-Jesper D. Jensen

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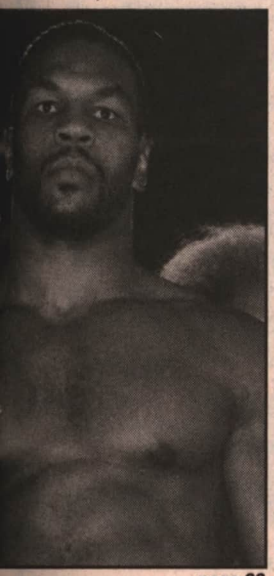

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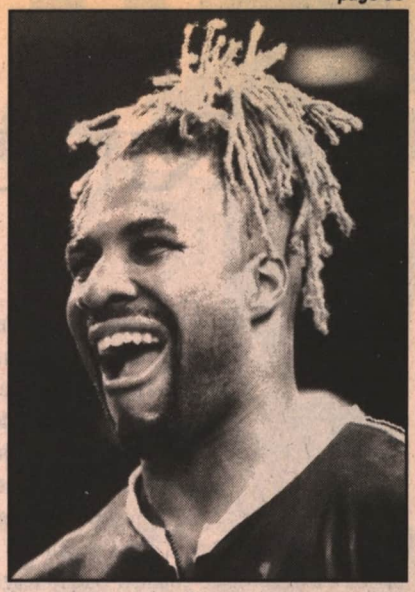

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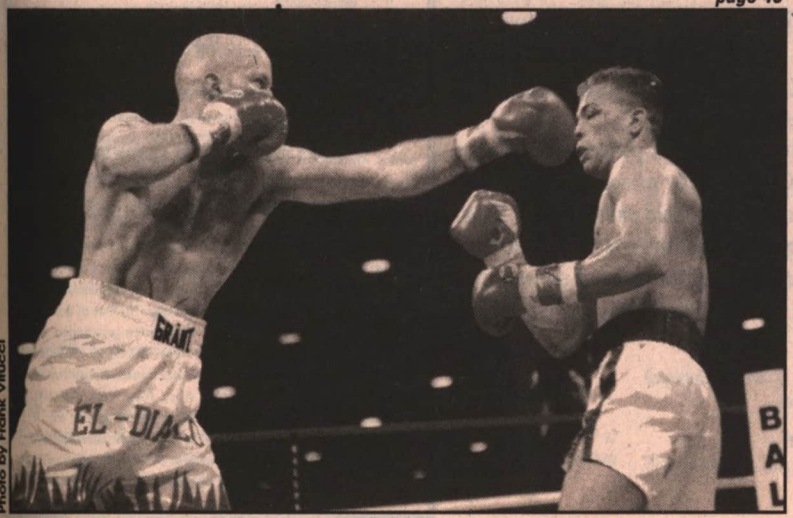

Photo by Frank Vitucci

RINGSIDE

For many boxing fans, Mike Tyson's dalliance with professional wrestling is the final slap in the face, the ultimate insult following the disgrace of "The Bite." To most fans, wrestling is a mockery, a fraud made all the more shameful because of its common roots with boxing. But that common root is impossible to deny, and besides, I bet there are quite a few readers of THE RING who enjoyed wrestling when they were kids. I know that I did.

I guess it's kind of ironic that the guy entrusted with the legacy of Nat Fleischer once counted Buddy Rogers, Skull Murphy, and Sweet Daddy Siki among his heroes. But it's true. And even though I lost interest in wrestling as my love of boxing increased, I'll always have a warm spot for the old grunt-and-groan business, and that's probably why my reaction to Tyson's participation in the WWF circus falls considerably short of outrage.

Actually, I've been surprised by the number of fighters I've encountered who also enjoy wrestling. Muhammad Ali was inspired by Gorgeous George. Larry Holmes was a huge Bruno Sammartino fan. Eddie Mustafa Muhammad used to get a kick out of staff photographer Bill Apter's impersonation of Dusty Rhodes. Recently, David Reid went through his repertoire of Hulk Hogan poses for THE RING's cameras.

But having a fascination with wrestling is one thing; professional involvement is another. And while I understand why Tyson couldn't resist engaging in a boyhood fantasy, especially for the kind of easy money he reportedly made, I was still sorry to see it.

Traditionally, when a boxer turns to wrestling, it's a signal he's on the skids. Other than Primo Carnera, who was disgracefully exploited as a fighter but did quite well for himself in wrestling, the history has been a sad one. The washed-up pug turned grappler, as personified by the Mountain Rivera character in *Requiem For A Heavyweight,* has become a potent symbol for all that's bad in boxing. Not that Tyson has reached the Mountain Rivera stage yet, but he could be approaching that point much quicker than his supporters might imagine.

If Tyson's actions in the second Evander Holyfield fight are any indication of how damaging the first loss was to his confidence, imagine how badly his self-esteem has slipped since the rematch. And without total belief in himself as a fighter, Tyson is doomed. If he fights Holyfield a third time, and chances are he will, Commander Vander is gonna kick his butt again. Then the floodgates will open, and guys you wouldn't have dreamed capable of beating Tyson prior to the Holyfield fights will be tacking Mike's hide to the wall. And when that day comes, he'll gladly trade a stepping-stone role for that of wrestling star.

You see, it's not Tyson's current flirtation with wrestling that perturbs me, it's the melancholy peek into the future it provides. Like a Greek tragedy where a sorrowful end is guaranteed, Tyson's career seems to be following the inevitable path so many fallen heroes have trod before him. Like the infantile embrace of senility, wrestling welcomes the weary warrior back into a world of childish fantasy. And for those of us who love boxing because it is, at its very core, as real as life and death itself, this is a lamentable fate indeed—even for even a sinner like Tyson.

Nigel Collins
Editor-in-Chief

Volume 77, No. 5 May 1998

The RING

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"The Bible Of Boxing"

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THE RING (ISSN: 0035-5410), Vol. 77, No. 5, is published monthly, with an additional issue in December, by London Publishing Co., 7002 W. Butler Pike, Ambler, PA 19002. Second-class postage paid at Ambler, PA 19002 and additional post offices. Postmaster: Send change of address notices to: THE RING, P.O. Box 2029, Dept. 9, Marion, OH 43302. Single copy price $2.95 ($3.95 in Canada, £2.25 in U.K.). Subscription price $32.45 in the U.S., $42.85 Canada and remaining countries. Not responsible for the loss or non-return of unsolicited articles or photographs, which will not be returned unless accompanied by a self-addressed envelope bearing the proper amount of postage.

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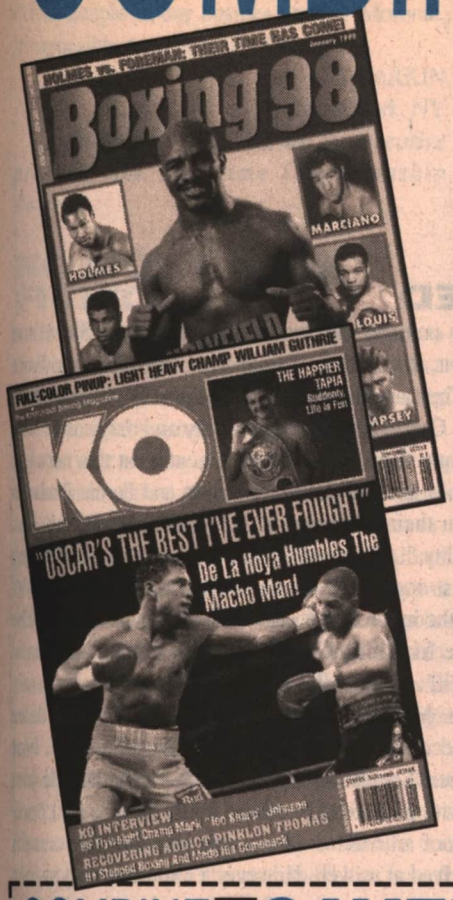

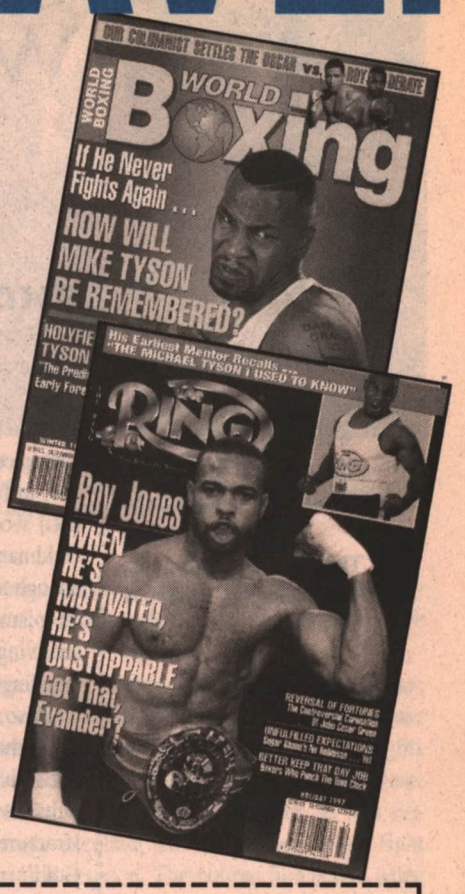

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COME OUT WRITING

We welcome your letters, which may be edited for reasons of space and clarity. Send your comments to Come Out Writing, The Ring, P.O. Box 1148, Ft. Washington, PA 19034

SHOWTIME KING IRKED

I must take serious exception to Ivan Goldman's outrageous comments regarding the Showtime announcement team in the February '98 issue of THE RING ("The Things That Drive Boxing Fans Crazy"). Our announcers do not work for Don King. They are employed by Showtime Inc. Calling them "pimps" and attributing it to no less an authority than Cedric Kushner is cowardly and despicable. Our announcers have never been instructed to censor or spin their "spiel" by an executive at this network and, in fact, have been encouraged to speak their minds at all times. Steve Albert and Ferdie Pacheco used words like "detestable" and "reprehensible" in their descriptions of Tyson's action, but Mr. Goldman evidently feels that is "tiptoeing around reality." Albert's position on Tyson has been strong enough to elicit complaints from Team Tyson, but not strong enough for Goldman. Pacheco's comments on mismatches and other issues have certainly raised the ire of Don King Productions, and being at the receiving end, I can tell you that ire is a considerable force. Jim Gray's relentless and un-intimidated handling of Tyson, John Horne, and King after Holyfield vs. Tyson II deserves an Emmy Award.

Also, Mr. Goldman's recollection of the Benn vs. McClellan fight must be clouded by the three years that have passed since it took place. Dr. Pacheco *never* questioned McClellan's courage. Not once. In fact, I quote Ferdie's comments from the tape: "Something is wrong with McClellan. He just quit, but there is no quit in McClellan. Something's wrong. It could be a head injury or an orbital bone [fracture]." Pretty astute judgment without the aid of an MRI or X-ray and one that I'm certain Goldman, with his apparent talent for observation, arrived at as well. However, Goldman irresponsibly chose to criticize Pacheco based on an inaccurate newspaper report of the incident, ignoring the facts and Pacheco's record for aggressively seeking to improve fighter safety.

It should also be noted here that although King and several of his close associates have taken issue over the years with the outspoken opinions of our announcers, he has never attempted to control their comments nor has he made the editorial content of our shows an issue in our business dealings, much to his credit.

Showtime Boxing Executive Producer Jay Larkin, pictured with Don King, was angered by an article in the February issue that criticized Showtime's announcing team and called them "pimps" for King.

Don King and anyone associated with him make easy targets, particularly by misinformed, incompetent so-called "journalists" who, rather than do their own research and formulate their own educated opinions, jump on a bandwagon of popular prejudice and self-serving propaganda without any concern for the welfare, the feelings, and the integrity of the people they malign.

Finally, Showtime has been a loyal supporter of THE RING and *KO* for a long time. Recently, we were the principal sponsor for THE RING's anniversary celebration in Atlantic City and THE RING remains a sponsor of our major boxing events, presenting the "Tale Of The Tape." If our announcers reflect the attitudes of the network they work

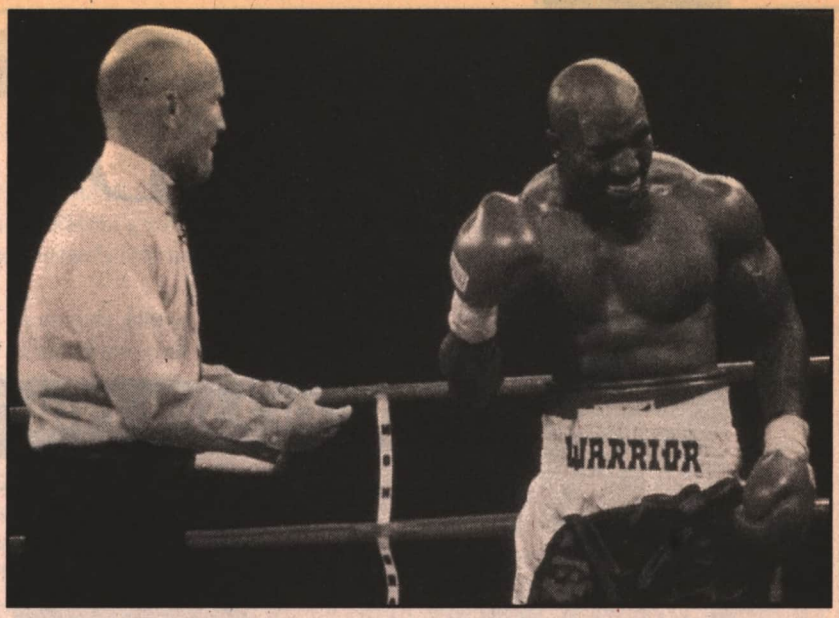
for and if, in the opinion of THE RING, they are "pimps," then what does that say for THE RING and people like Mr. Goldman who make their living writing for it? What do *you* call someone who works with pimps? Want to know what drives people in our business crazy? Moronic, irresponsible comments like Goldman's.

JAY LARKIN
New York, NY

[Editor's note: Jay Larkin is executive producer for Showtime Championship Boxing.]

NO MORE BITE FIGHTS

In representing the interests of the American Association for the Improvement of Boxing Inc. and the Jerry Quarry Foundation in promoting safety in professional boxing, I am writing to inform your readers and the staff at THE RING about an important piece of legislation pending in the U.S. House of Representatives. Introduced by the Honorable Eleanor Holmes Norton of the District of Columbia, the purpose of this legislation, H.R. 2354—The State Reciprocity Act of Professional Boxing, is to close a loophole in the Professional Boxing Act of 1996. The passage and implementation of this bill would federally enforce a state boxing commission's suspension of a fighter who wrongfully and illegally attempts to seriously injure his or her opponent during a match. In other words, had this legislation been in effect in June of 1997, the Nevada State Athletic Commission's suspension of Mike Tyson for engaging grievously in unsafe competitive behavior would have automatically prohibited him from fighting anywhere in America in accordance with federal law.



There is new federal legislation pending that could help prevent incidents like Tyson biting Holyfield from ever happening in the ring again. If the legislation became law, the offending fighter would be automatically suspended from boxing anywhere in the U.S.

The implementation of this legislation would accomplish four important objectives: 1) ensures that those fighters who engage in unsafe practices in one state, and thus receive a suspension, do not fight anywhere else; 2) promotes the safety of those who fight by uniformly punishing those who engage in dangerous and unsportsmanlike behavior toward opponents; 3) places additional power in the hands of the members of the Association of Boxing Commissioners, where additional regulatory powers should be; 4) gives fight fans who pay for the matches greater assurances they will see matches between opponents who will follow the rules and thus fight in a fair and competitive manner.

The AAIB and TJQF believe that all fight fans should contact their U.S. Representative and ask him or her to co-sponsor this bill.

GEORGE L. OTTO,
Washington, DC

[Editor's note: For more information, call Mr. Bing Yee of Representative Norton's office at: (202) 225-8050 or fax him a message at (202) 225-3002.]

MERCILESS CRITICISM

Can somebody please tell me why Ray Mercer never gets any respect? This is a fighter who captured an Olympic gold medal and boasts the best chin in heavyweight history. The public criticizes Mercer for losses to Larry Holmes and Jesse Ferguson, but he easily avenged the losses at a time when both Holmes and Ferguson were still dangerous.

Along with his steel chin, Mercer also possesses courage, toughness, and power in both hands. You can even make a case that Mercer should have been awarded the decision in his fights with Evander Holyfield and Lennox Lewis. Both were very close. Currently, Mercer seems to be in his best shape ever, as was evident when his surprisingly excellent stamina turned a close fight into a victory over Tim Witherspoon. The bottom line is that when Ray Mercer is focused, he's as good as any heavyweight out there.

STEPHEN DONATELLI
Pittsburgh, PA

OSCAR OWES AN EXPLANATION

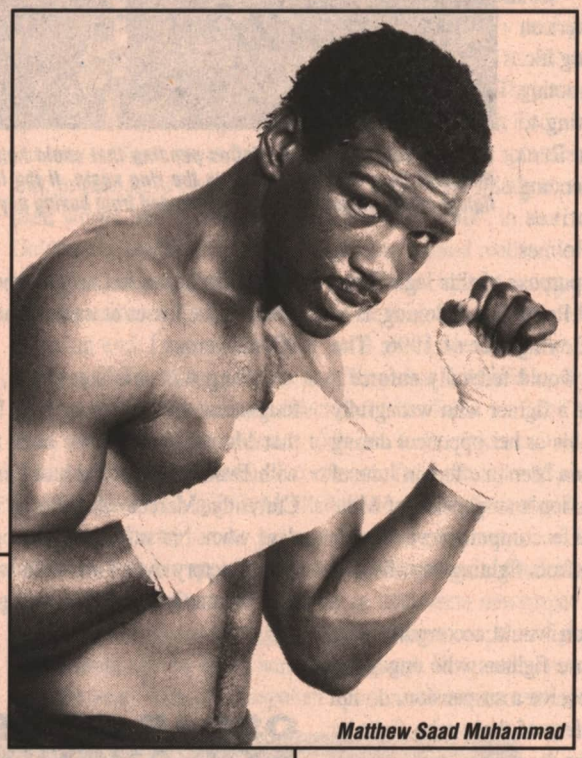
Before the Pernell Whitaker fight, Oscar De La Hoya made some controversial comments about African-American fighters that was hardly discussed by THE RING, or any of its sister publications. Being an African-American, and a fan of De La Hoya's, I'm still hoping he will explain the things he said. Was it in the heat of the moment? Was it for hype? It is a horrible insult to all African-Americans when a "role model" such as De La Hoya makes such racially insensitive and outright ridiculous remarks. Also, his comments were discussed much more in European Boxing magazines. Is the American press reluctant to criticize a fighter like De La Hoya?

CARY SIMMONS
San Francisco, CA

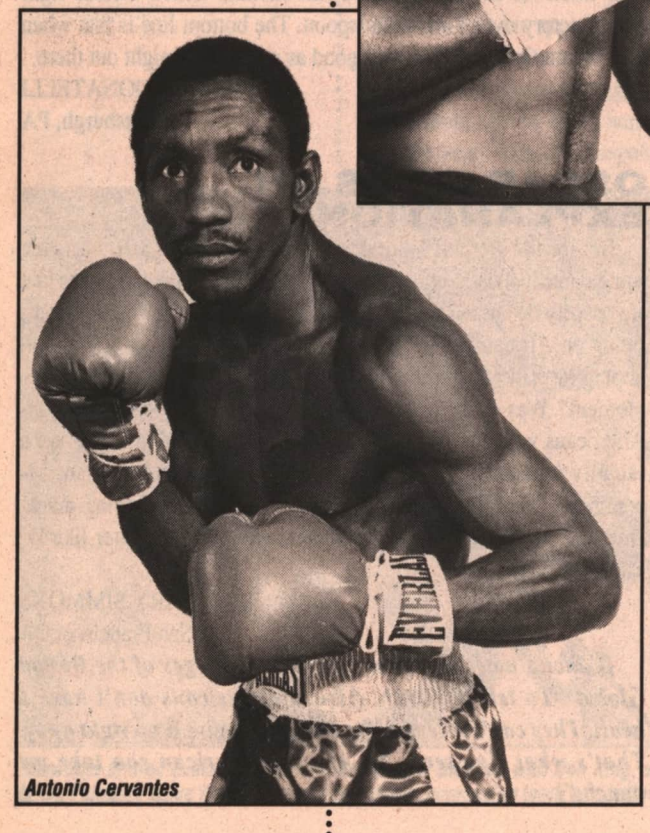
[Editor's note: De La Hoya told Ron Borges of the Boston Globe: "To tell the truth, African-Americans don't have a heart. They can't take it to the body. They give it up right away. That's what I've seen. No African-American can take my punch."] ■

ROUND ONE

HALL OF FAME INDUCTEES ANNOUNCED



Matthew Saad Muhammad



Antonio Cervantes

Just the ninth boxer to be elected in his first year of eligibility, Matthew Saad Muhammad heads up the list of 1998 inductees into the International Boxing Hall of Fame in Canastota, New York. The other living inductees include Lou Duva, Miguel Canto, and Antonio Cervantes, and according to Hall of Fame Executive Director Ed Brophy, all four are expected to participate in the 1998 Hall of Fame Weekend festivities.

Saad Muhammad, 39-16-3 (29), reigned as WBC light heavyweight champion from 1979-'81, making eight successful defenses. The Philadelphia native, who retired in 1992, was considered by many to be the most exciting fighter of his day. Mexican great Canto, 61-9-4 (15), held the WBC flyweight title from 1975-'79, making a division-record 14 consecutive successful defenses. Cervantes, 66-12-1 (36), the first Colombian named to the Hall, held the WBA junior welterweight title from 1972-'76 and 1977-'80, recording 16 victorious defenses over the course of his two reigns. Duva is probably the most well-known figure in the group, a former boxer who gained his greatest fame as a championship-level promoter, trainer, and manager. Duva and his family founded the highly successful Main Events promotional company.

The other members of the Class of 1998: Sammy Angott in the Modern category; Joe Choyinski, Frankie Genaro, George "Kid" Lavigne, Benny Lynch, and Sammy Mandell in the Old-Timer category; William A. Brady and Herman Taylor in the Non-Participant category; and Prof. Mike Donovan in the Pioneer category.

Those interested in more information regarding the June 11-14 Induction Weekend can contact the International Boxing Hall of Fame at (315) 697-7095, or visit the Hall of Fame's official website at www.IBHOF.com.

—Eric Raskin

GRAHAM "UNCROWNED" NO LONGER

Billy Graham, "The Uncrowned Welterweight Champion Of The World," finally got his crown.

In a moving ceremony at the VBA Ring 8 annual holiday dinner in New York, Kid Gavilan presented Graham's wife and children with a championship belt, posthumously crowning the man who deserved to be king.

Graham challenged Gavilan for the welterweight title at Madison Square Garden on August 29, 1951. Many felt Graham defeated Gavilan, but the officials scoring the contest awarded Gavilan a split decision. It has long been alleged that the verdict was fixed because Graham wouldn't sell an interest of his contract to underworld figures.

"I tip my hat to the Graham family," said Gavilan. "I am happy to be here. I have a lot of respect for Billy Graham."

Gavilan, who beat Graham in a rematch the next year, did not offer his opinion on the fight, and the Graham family was not looking for a concession speech.

"We didn't take it that Kid Gavilan was conceding that he lost the fight," said Doug Graham, Billy's son. "It was a very, very close fight. Although, most people thought my father won, obviously it could have gone either way. We are just very pleased that Ring 8 and Kid Gavilan were this thoughtful. Kid's presence made it very special."

Also honored at the dinner were Dr. Charles Gellman (Ray Arcel Humanitarian Award), former lightweight champ Beau Jack, historian Hank Kaplan, former middleweight Lenny Mangiapane, boxing equipment manufacturer Izzy Zerling, and 88-year-old Sammy Farber, who boxed in the first ever New York Golden Gloves tournament in 1927.

Photo by Robert Cassidy

Gavilan presents Graham's wife, Lorraine, and son, Billy Jr., with the belt

—Robert Cassidy

MANIACAL "MACHO"

Amy and Christian Camacho

Hector Camacho's last performance inside the ring did little to support his claim of being "The Macho Man," as he spent 12 rounds clutching and hugging Oscar De La Hoya to avoid a knockout. But that's nothing compared to the actions Camacho's wife, Amy, accused him of taking on January 17 at their Orlando, Florida, home. What Camacho did on that day, according to her claims, is about as far from macho as you can get.

In a complaint filed January 20 at Orange County Circuit Court in Orlando, Mrs. Camacho said her husband broke down a door in their home and threatened to destroy her car and the garage door. He also threatened his five-year-old son, Christian, according to the complaint, telling him, "I'll beat your little ass." The complaint said Camacho later threw a phone in frustration that hit his son in the back.

Also in the complaint, Camacho's wife, who says she is four months pregnant, accused her husband of regular substance abuse and adultery. "He definitely needs help," she told the *Orlando Sentinel*.

Camacho, 35, had a temporary restraining order placed on him by his wife after the incident.

TV FIGHTS OF THE MONTH

DATE	WINNER/LOSER	NETWORK	DIVISION	SIGNIFICANCE	MATCHUP	RESULT
1-6-98	Arthur Williams W 12 Adolpho Washington	USA	USBA c	A-	A	A
A career-best performance by Williams in a thrilling war						
1-9-98	Floyd Mayweather KO 5 Hector Arroyo	ESPN2	l	B	B-	B-
Experienced Arroyo makes it interesting until Mayweather's power takes over						
1-10-98	Peter McNeeley W Disq. 8 Larry Menefee	FOXSN	h	C-	B+	B+
A wild one ends when Menefee slams McNeeley's head into the turnbuckle						
1-13-98	Israel Cardona KO 3 Sam Girard	USA	USBA l	B	C+	B-
A single left hook kayos Girard, a late replacement for John-John Molina						
1-16-98	Lawrence Clay-Bey KO 2 Mario Cawley	FOXSN	h	C	C	C
Anthony Green, who pulled out with an injury, would have been a better test for Clay-Bey						
1-16-98	Lance Whitaker KO 1 Joe Ballard	FOXSN	h	C	C	C+
Another quickie kayo for the hulking Whitaker, but we still don't know if he can fight						
1-16-98	Kenny Keene W 12 Richard Lamontagne	ESPN2	IBA c	C	A	B+
Typical Keene fare: blood, guts, and lots of punches						
1-17-98	Michael Grant KO 5 David Izon	HBO	IBC h	B+	A	B-
Izon can't deal with his opponent's size and strength; Grant makes it look easy						
1-17-98	Angel Manfredy KO 8 Arturo Gatti	HBO	l	A	A+	A
"Thunder" finally runs out of miracles; Manfredy sparkles						
1-23-98	Verno Phillips KO 9 Julian Jackson	ESPN	WBU jm	B-	A	B
Phillips too young, too quick, too busy; a left hook grounds "The Hawk"						
1-23-98	Vassiliy Jirov KO 2 Jason Nicholson	ESPN	c	C	C-	C+
Jirov's bodypunches and combinations too much for journeyman Nicholson						

Category Explanation: "Significance"—The importance of the bout to the division and the fighters' futures; "Matchup"—The quality of the fighters and the prefight determination of how their styles will mesh; "Result"—How the bout turned out, from the viewer's perspective.

(World title fights in **bold** type)

Division key: h—heavyweight; c—cruiserweight; lh—light heavyweight; sm—super middleweight; m—middleweight; jm—junior middleweight; w—welterweight; jw—junior welterweight; l—lightweight; jl—junior lightweight; f—featherweight; jf—junior featherweight; b—bantamweight; jb—junior bantamweight; fl—flyweight; jfl—junior flyweight; s—strawweight

Network key: PPV—Pay-Per-View; Show—Showtime

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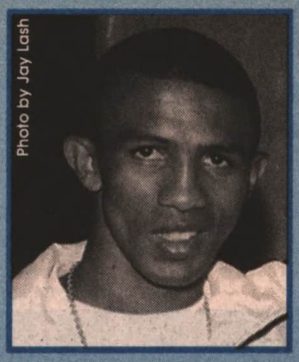
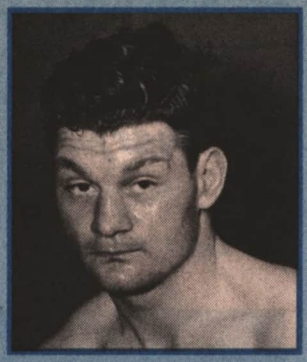
OUTSIDE THE ROPES

Already facing a shorter life expectancy than most, HIV positive former heavyweight contender **Tommy Morrison** lost another six months on January 6 when he was sentenced to jail time after being found guilty in a drunken driving case. Morrison was charged with driving under the influence, carrying a firearm while under the influence of liquor, and unlawful transportation of an opened alcoholic beverage container. The charges stemmed from an August traffic accident that injured three people in Morrison's hometown of Jay, Oklahoma ... Former WBA junior featherweight champion **Antonio Cermeno**, who shot his girlfriend's sister in the leg last December, claimed the gun went off accidentally and denied reports that he fled to Venezuela. No charges will be brought against the top contender to the WBA featherweight title currently held by **Wilfredo Vazquez** ... Former heavyweight contender **Mitch "Blood" Green**, best known for his streetfight with **Mike Tyson**, was arraigned and released without bail on January 20 after police caught him in the lobby of a Manhattan building the day before with a small bag of the hallucinogen "PCP." In typically senseless fashion, Green explained his possession of the drug to police by saying, "I was following a girl into the building who I paid $10" ... Pennsylvania recently became the ninth state to pass legislation requiring all boxers to test negative for the HIV virus in order to be granted a boxing license. The rule is expected to take effect sometime later this year ... Early-'80s junior middleweight star **Tony Ayala Jr.** is up for parole by the end of March after serving 15 years of a 15- to 30-year sentence for several charges, including aggravated sexual assault. Ayala will have turned 35 by the time of his parole hearing, and he hopes to return to the ring if released ... Former British, Commonwealth, and European heavyweight champion **Bruce Woodcock**, 76, died on December 21, 1997, in England. Among the outstanding fighters Woodcock beat during his seven-year pro career (1942-'50) were **Freddie Mills**, **Gus Lesnevich**, and **Lee Savold** ... Junior bantamweight **Hipolito "Polo" Saucedo**, 29, was found shot to death in his car in Houston, Texas, on January 19. His widow, **Susan Saucedo**, told THE RING that she hopes to honor his memory by opening a gym for inner-city youths. In Saucedo's only world title fight, he was stopped in the 12th round by then-IBF junior bantam champ **Danny Romero**.



Cermeno: Accidental shooting



Woodcock: Dead at 76

THE PUNCHLINES

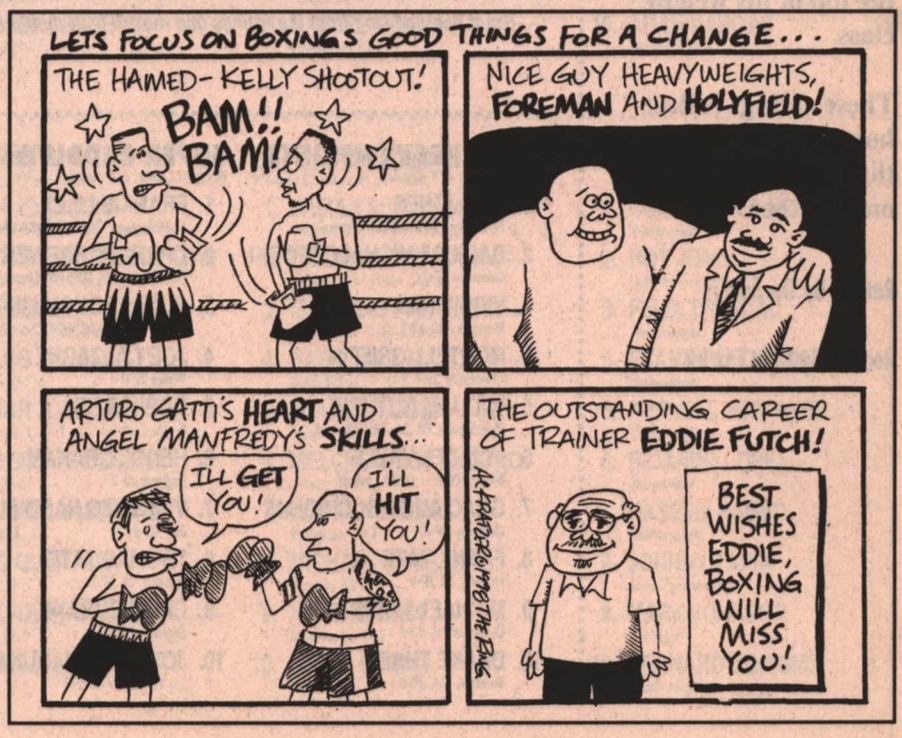
"To beat Ray Leonard, I would have had to knock him out. I wouldn't have won a decision because he was America's poster boy."

—An incarcerated Tony Ayala Jr., reflecting recently on opponents he would have liked to have fought if he hadn't gone to jail.

"Your ass is grass and I'm your lawn mower."

—A confident Kennedy McKinney at the final press conference prior to his upset kayo of Junior Jones.

AL KRATZER'S VIEW



THE RING RATINGS

For Period Ended January 30, 1998

How Our Ratings Are Compiled

In each division, fighters are ranked according to their abilities and accomplishments.

Being champion does not necessarily mean a fighter will be rated at the top of his weight class.

These ratings reflect how the best fighters in the world rate against one another.

Ratings By The Editors

Records By Fight Fax Inc.

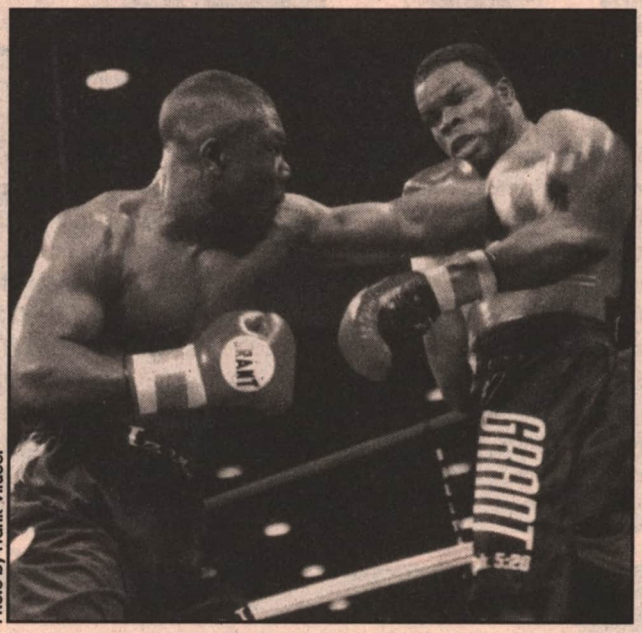


Photo by Frank Vitucci

Grant bumped Izon from the ratings and moved in at number eight

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight Unlimited

1. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD** — Fairburn, GA *35-3 (WBA/IBF Champ)*
2. **LENNOX LEWIS** — England *32-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **GEORGE FOREMAN** — Marshall, TX *76-5*
4. **MICHAEL MOORER** — Detroit, MI *39-2*
5. **RAY MERCER** — West Orange, NJ *24-4-1*
6. **CHRIS BYRD** — Flint, MI *23-0*
7. **SHANNON BRIGGS** — New York, NY *31-1*
8. **MICHAEL GRANT** — Norristown, PA *27-0*
9. **IKE IBEABUCHI** — Dallas, TX *17-0*
10. **DAVID TUA** — Totowa, NJ *28-1*

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 190 pounds

1. **FABRICE TIOZZO** — France *38-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **MARCELO DOMINGUEZ** — Argentina *22-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **IMAMU MAYFIELD** — New Brunswick, NJ *17-1 (IBF Champ)*
4. **NATE MILLER** — Philadelphia, PA *30-5*
5. **CARL THOMPSON** — England *22-4*
6. **ROBERT DANIELS** — Miami, FL *35-3-1*
7. **ARTHUR WILLIAMS** — Las Vegas, NV *28-4-1*
8. **JUAN CARLOS GOMEZ** — Germany *21-0*
9. **ADOLPHO WASHINGTON** — Lexington, KY *26-5-2*
10. **STEFAN ANGHERN** — Switzerland *18-4-1*

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Weight limit: 175 pounds

1. **ROY JONES** — Pensacola, FL *35-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **DARIUSZ MICHALCZEWSKI** — Germany *37-0*
3. **VIRGIL HILL** — Bismarck, ND *43-2*
4. **MONTELL GRIFFIN** — Chicago, IL *29-1*
5. **WILLIAM GUTHRIE** — Philadelphia, PA *24-0 (IBF Champ)*
6. **LOU DEL VALLE** — Bronx, NY *27-1 (WBA Champ)*
7. **GRACIANO ROCCHIGIANI** — Germany *39-4-1*
8. **FRANK TATE** — Houston, TX *39-4*
9. **MICHAEL NUNN** — Davenport, IA *52-3*
10. **DRAKE THADZI** — Brockton, MA *29-8-1*

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 168 pounds

1. **FRANKIE LILES** — N. Hollywood, CA *31-1 (WBA Champ)*
2. **CHARLES BREWER** — Philadelphia, PA *30-5 (IBF Champ)*
3. **SUGARBOY MALINGA** — South Africa *42-10 (WBC Champ)*
4. **JOE CALZAGHE** — Wales *24-0*
5. **ROBIN REID** — England *25-1-1*
6. **HEROL GRAHAM** — England *48-5*
7. **VINCENZO NARDIELLO** — Italy *33-6*
8. **THOMAS TATE** — Houston, TX *33-5*
9. **CHRIS EUBANK** — England *45-3-2*
10. **JOSEPH KIWANUKA** — Las Vegas, NV *25-2-2*

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 160 pounds

1. **BERNARD HOPKINS** — Philadelphia, PA *33-2-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **KEITH HOLMES** — Washington, D.C. *30-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JULIO CESAR GREEN** — Brooklyn, NY *22-2 (WBA Champ)*
4. **WILLIAM JOPPY** — Washington, D.C. *24-1-1*
5. **OTIS GRANT** — Canada *30-1-1*
6. **LONNIE BRADLEY** — New York, NY *26-0-1*
7. **ROBERT McCRACKEN** — England *30-0*
8. **BRIAN BARBOSA** — Providence, RI *23-3*
9. **HASSINE CHERIFI** — France *24-2-1*
10. **RYAN RHODES** — England *16-1*

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 154 pounds

1. **LAURENT BOUDOUANI**
   France *36-2 (WBA Champ)*
2. **YORY BOY CAMPAS**
   Mexico *69-2 (IBF Champ)*
3. **KEITH MULLINGS**
   Brooklyn, NY *15-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **TERRY NORRIS**
   Mission Valley, CA *47-7*
5. **JULIO CESAR VASQUEZ**
   Argentina *59-3*
6. **WINKY WRIGHT**
   St. Petersburg, FL *38-1*
7. **RAUL MARQUEZ**
   Houston, TX *28-1*
8. **BRONCO McKART**
   Monroe, MI *33-2*
9. **HECTOR CAMACHO**
   Orlando, FL *64-4-1*
10. **EMMETT LINTON**
    Tacoma, WA *24-2*

WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 147 pounds

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Whittier, CA *27-0 (WBC Champ)*
2. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Norfolk, VA *41-2-1*
3. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Puerto Rico *32-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **IKE QUARTEY**
   Ghana *34-0-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **JOSE LUIS LOPEZ**
   Mexico *40-3-2*
6. **OBA CARR**
   Detroit, MI *43-2-1*
7. **PATRICK CHARPENTIER**
   France *26-4-1*
8. **VERNON FORREST**
   Atlanta, GA *23-0*
9. **WILFREDO RIVERA**
   Puerto Rico *27-3-1*
10. **ANDREI PESTRIAEV**
    Russia *20-2*

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 140 pounds

1. **VINCE PHILLIPS**
   Las Vegas, NV *38-3 (IBF Champ)*
2. **KHALID RAHILOU**
   France *31-2 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JULIO CESAR CHAVEZ**
   Mexico *99-2-1*
4. **MIGUEL ANGEL GONZALEZ**
   Mexico *42-1*
5. **KOSTYA TSZYU**
   Australia *19-1-1*
6. **RAFAEL RUELAS**
   Studio City, CA *50-3*
7. **HECTOR LOPEZ**
   Palmdale, CA *37-6-1*
8. **JOHN-JOHN MOLINA**
   Puerto Rico *46-4*
9. **REGGIE GREEN**
   Clinton, MD *26-2*
10. **ALFONSO SANCHEZ**
    Mexico *17-1*

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 135 pounds

1. **ORZUBEK NAZAROV**
   Japan *25-0 (WBA Champ)*
2. **SHANE MOSLEY**
   Pomona, CA *25-0 (IBF Champ)*
3. **STEVE JOHNSTON**
   Denver, CO *23-0 (WBC Champ)*
4. **PHILLIP HOLIDAY**
   South Africa *31-1*
5. **GEORGE SCOTT**
   Pembroke Pines, FL *32-1*
6. **AZUMAH NELSON**
   Ghana *39-4-2*
7. **ISRAEL CARDONA**
   Hartford, CT *28-2*
8. **JEAN-BAPTISTE MENDY**
   France *50-6-2*
9. **ARTUR GRIGORIJAN**
   Uzbekistan *23-0*
10. **CESAR BAZAN**
    Mexico *30-2-1*

JR. LIGHTWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 130 pounds

1. **GENARO HERNANDEZ**
   Los Angeles, CA *37-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **ANGEL MANFREDY**
   Gary, IN *23-2-1*
3. **ARTURO GATTI**
   Jersey City, NJ *29-2 (IBF Champ)*
4. **YONG SOO CHOI**
   South Korea *23-2-1 (WBA Champ)*
5. **ROBERT GARCIA**
   Oxnard, CA *29-0*
6. **JULIEN LORCY**
   France *37-0-2*
7. **TRACY PATTERSON**
   Highland, NY *60-5-1*
8. **JESUS CHAVEZ**
   Austin, TX *22-1*
9. **TOM JOHNSON**
   Detroit, MI *45-3-2*
10. **GABE RUELAS**
    Arleta, CA *44-4*

FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 126 pounds

1. **NASEEM HAMED**
   England *29-0*
2. **LUISITO ESPINOSA**
   Philippines *42-7 (WBC Champ)*
3. **WILFREDO VAZQUEZ**
   Puerto Rico *50-7-3 (WBA Champ)*
4. **HECTOR LIZARRAGA**
   Fresno, CA *34-8-5 (IBF Champ)*
5. **KEVIN KELLEY**
   Flushing, NY *47-2-2*
6. **JUAN MANUEL MARQUEZ**
   Mexico *23-1*
7. **ANGEL VAZQUEZ**
   Hartford, CT *15-0*
8. **DERRICK GAINER**
   Pensacola, FL *21-4*
9. **ORLANDO CANIZALES**
   Laredo, TX *46-3-1*
10. **ANTONIO CERMENO**
    Venezuela *29-1*

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 122 pounds

1. **VUYANI BUNGU**
   South Africa *34-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **ERIK MORALES**
   Mexico *28-0 (WBC Champ)*
3. **KENNEDY McKINNEY**
   Memphis, TN *33-3-1*
4. **JUNIOR JONES**
   Brooklyn, NY *44-3*
5. **MARCO ANTONIO BARRERA**
   Mexico *43-2*
6. **DANIEL ZARAGOZA**
   Mexico *55-8-3*
7. **WAYNE McCULLOUGH**
   Las Vegas, NV *20-1*
8. **FRED NORWOOD**
   St. Louis, MO *28-0-1*
9. **ENRIQUE SANCHEZ**
   Mexico *23-0*
10. **RAFAEL DEL VALLE**
    Puerto Rico *23-1-1*

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 118 pounds

1. **TIM AUSTIN**
   Cincinnati, OH *17-0-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **NANA KONADU**
   Ghana *37-3 (WBA Champ)*
3. **JOICHIRO TATSUYOSHI**
   Japan *15-4-1 (WBC Champ)*
4. **SIRIMONGKOL SINGMANASSUK**
   Thailand *16-1*
5. **JORGE ELIECER JULIO**
   Colombia *37-1*
6. **MBULELO BOTILE**
   South Africa *21-1*
7. **PAULIE AYALA**
   Ft. Worth, TX *23-0*
8. **VEERAPHOL SAHAPROM**
   Thailand *14-1*
9. **DAORUNG C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *61-6-3*
10. **ADAN VARGAS**
    Mexico *25-1-1*

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 115 pounds

1. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Albuquerque, NM *42-0-2 (IBF Champ)*
2. **GERRY PENALOSA**
   Philippines *39-1-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **SATOSHI IIDA**
   Japan *23-1-1 (WBA Champ)*
4. **YOKTHAI SITHOAR**
   Thailand *14-1-1*
5. **HYUNG CHUL LEE**
   South Korea *19-6*
6. **HAROLD GREY**
   Colombia *21-2*
7. **LUIS BOLANO**
   Colombia *23-0*
8. **RATANACHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *25-3*
9. **JULIO GAMBOA**
   Nicaragua *21-2*
10. **JOEL LUNA ZARATE**
    Mexico *31-2-1*

FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 112 pounds

1. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Washington, D.C. *33-1 (IBF Champ)*
2. **CHATCHAI DUTCHBOY GYM**
   Thailand *31-1 (WBC Champ)*
3. **JOSE BONILLA**
   Venezuela *24-3 (WBA Champ)*
4. **CARLOS SALAZAR**
   Argentina *46-7-3*
5. **ARTHUR JOHNSON**
   East St. Louis, IL *17-3*
6. **SAEN SOR PLOENCHIT**
   Thailand *26-1*
7. **ALEJANDRO MONTIEL**
   Mexico *35-3*
8. **DAVID GUERAULT**
   France *11-0*
9. **CHOKVIWAT CHOKCHAI**
   Thailand *30-3*
10. **JESPER JENSEN**
    Denmark *25-1*

JR. FLYWEIGHTS
Weight Limit: 108 pounds

1. **SAMAN SORJATURONG**
   Thailand *37-2-1 (WBC Champ)*
2. **PHICHITNOI C. SIRIWAT**
   Thailand *18-1 (WBA Champ)*
3. **MAURICIO PASTRANA**
   Colombia *17-0 (IBF Champ)*
4. **BABY JAKE MATLALA**
   South Africa *47-10-2*
5. **JUAN CORDOBA**
   Argentina *31-4-3*
6. **MELCHOR COB CASTRO**
   Mexico *50-5-4*
7. **JOMA GAMBOA**
   Philippines *22-3-1*
8. **MICHAEL CARBAJAL**
   Phoenix, AZ *45-4*
9. **HI YONG CHOI**
   South Korea *19-2*
10. **JESUS CHONG**
    Mexico *31-8*

POUND-FOR-POUND

1. **OSCAR DE LA HOYA**
   Welterweight
2. **ROY JONES**
   Light Heavyweight
3. **FELIX TRINIDAD**
   Welterweight
4. **EVANDER HOLYFIELD**
   Heavyweight
5. **PERNELL WHITAKER**
   Welterweight
6. **RICARDO LOPEZ**
   Strawweight
7. **NASEEM HAMED**
   Featherweight
8. **JOHNNY TAPIA**
   Junior Bantamweight
9. **MARK JOHNSON**
   Flyweight
10. **BERNARD HOPKINS**
    Middleweight

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Sept. 1983: Exclusive: Sugar Ray Leonard Talks About His Past, Present, And Future. Plus: Hagler-Duran, Jaime Garza, Panama Lewis, Spinks-Muhammad, Bobo Olson, Mustafa Hamsho, Muniz-Chandler, Hearns-Sutherland.

Oct. 1983: Special Hagler-Duran Program. Plus: Best fighter poll, Jose Sulaiman, Milton McCrory, Camacho-Limon, DeLeon-Gordon, Hamsho-Benitez, who's who, Bill McNeese.

Nov. 1983: Gerrie Coetzee: The New Heavyweight Champ Sets His Sights On Holmes. Plus: Alexis Arguello, Murray Sutherland, James J. Braddock, Muhammad Ali.

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July 1984: Bazooka's Aim Is True: Gomez Shoots Down LaPorte In The Battle For San Juan. Plus: Michael Spinks, Vinny Pazienza, Tyrone Crawley, Leonard's comeback, Chandler-Sandoval, Hagler-Roldan.

Aug. 1984: Olympic Special: Mark Breland Leads A Strong Squad. Plus: Leonard-Howard, Davila-Sanchez, Bonecrusher-Bruno, Bramble-Mancini, Hatcher-Bumphus, Garza-Orozco.

Oct. 1984: The Beast From The East: John Mugabi Strikes Terror Into The Hearts Of Men. Plus: Olympics, Bill Costello, Davey Moore, Wilfred Benitez, King's heavyweights.

Dec. 1984: Hagler Hammers Hamsho. Plus: Barry McGuigan, boxing's best, James Broad, Julian Jackson, Pinklon Thomas.

Jan. 1985: Holmes-Bonecrusher Color Action. Plus: Gerry Cooney, pro debuts (Breland, Hill, Taylor, Biggs, Whitaker, Holyfield), Santos-Medal, Meza-Garza.

Feb. 1985: Showdown: Page Clobbers Coetzee For WBA Title. Plus: Larry Holmes, lightweights, Cooney-Chaplin, McCallum-Minchillo.

April 1985: Special Hagler-Hearns Program. Plus: British fighters, Hector Camacho, Donald Curry, Sonny Liston.

May 1985: The Rematch In Reno: Bramble-Mancini Color Action. Plus: Donald Curry, Aaron Pryor, McGuigan-LaPorte.

June 1985: Holmes' Last Hurrah? Holmes-Bey Color Action. Plus: Holmes vs. all-time greats, Paul-Arroyo, 1901.

July 1985: Marvelous Marvin! Are There Any More Mountains To Climb? Plus: Chavez, Tyson, Tubbs, Sullivan, great first rounds.

Aug. 1985: Seven Elected To The Ring Hall Of Fame (Jose Napoles, Jake LaMotta, Panama Al Brown, Manuel Ortiz, Young Stribling, Thomas Jackling, Lord Lonsdale). Plus: Spinks-Holmes preview, Barry McGuigan.

Sept. 1985: Barry McGuigan: Can He Be Boxing's Savior? Plus: Truth Williams, Tyrell Biggs, Greg Richardson, Julio Cesar Chavez, Paul-Blake, Witherspoon-Bonecrusher, Berbick-Bey, Pinklon Thomas.

Oct. 1985: The "Macho Man" Rides Again. Plus: Jeff Fenech, Berbick-Green, John E. Garcia, Dwight Muhammad Qawi, McCallum-Braxton.

Nov. 1985: Will Hagler Feast On The Beast? Plus: Hagler-Mugabi & Hearns-Shuler previews, Lonnie Smith, Pintor-Meza, Chuck Hull, Benitez-Moley.

Dec. 1985: Michael Spinks: Against All Odds. Plus: Curry-McCrory preview, McGuigan-Taylor, Alexis Arguello, Michael Olajide, Chavez-Pratchett.

Jan. 1986: In Search Of A Heavyweight Champion. Plus: Azumah Nelson, Arguello-Jefferson, Olympic update, Chicago boxing.

Feb. 1986: Mike Tyson: The Legacy Of Cus D'Amato. Plus: Rocky IV, Curry-McCrory, Teddy Mann, Kenny Lane.

March 1986 (Awards Issue): Co-Fighters Of The Year: Marvelous Marvin Hagler & Donald Curry. Plus: Ring's Annual Awards, Evander Holyfield, Williamson-Muhammad, Camacho-Roach, 1985 boxing diary.

April 1986: Witherspoon Tames Tubbs For WBA Title. Plus: Dream fights, Greg Haugen, Tyrell Biggs, Mark Breland, Paul Gonzales, HBO tourney, Witherspoon-Tubbs, Frank Warren, Gene Tunney.

May 1986: Marvelous Marvin Tames The Beast. Plus: Hearns-Shuler, Mike Tyson, Bramble-Crawley, Sandoval-Canizales, Marvin Johnson, McGuigan-Cabrera, Arguello-Costello, Weaver-Williams.

June 1986: Barry's Back In The USA: McGuigan Breathes A Breath Of Fresh Air Into American Fight Scene. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Robbie Sims, Qawi-Holyfield preview, Berbick-Thomas, Bruno-Coetzee.

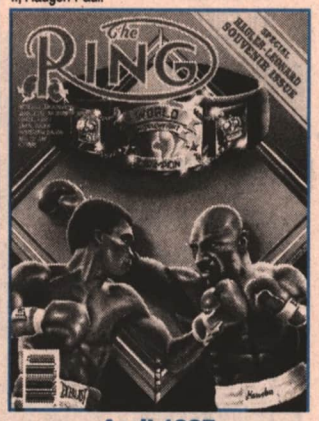
July 1986: Spinks-Holmes II: Who Really Won? Plus: Frank Bruno, Richie Sandoval, Kevin Watts, Tyson-Tillis, Boza-Edwards-Alli, Johnson-Burns.

Aug. 1986: Is Sugar Ray Still Sweet? Plus: Lloyd Honeyghan, Tyson-Green, Cooney-Gregg, Hall of Fame (Eder Jofre, Benny Lynch, Bud Taylor, Sam McVey, Nat Langham, John Chambers), Bernardo Pinango.

Sept. 1986: Gerry Cooney vs. Mike Tyson: Who Would Win? Plus: Cruz-McGuigan, Hearns-Medal, Tyson-Gross, Sims-Duran.

Dec. 1986: The Weekend That Shook The Boxing World. Rosario-Bramble & Honeyghan-Curry. Plus: Butch Lewis interview, Buster Drayton, Hector Camacho, Jake LaMotta.

April 1987: Hagler-Leonard Souvenir Issue. Plus: Czyz, Orlando Canizales, Mugabi-Thomas, Biggs-Snipes, Chavez-LaPorte, Bonecrusher-Witherspoon II, Haugen-Paul.



April 1987

May 1987: Mike Tyson: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Year-end awards, *The Ring* annual ratings, Louie Espinoza, Herol Graham.

June 1987: Vinny Paz: Phenom Or Phony? Plus: Tyson-Bonecrusher, Mark Breland, Brian Mitchell, Holyfield, Czyz-Edwards, Olajide-Lee, Curry-Montgomery.

July 1987: Spinks-Cooney: The Fight That Refused To Die. Plus: The new *Ring* ratings, Terry Marsh, George Foreman's return, Khaosai Galaxy, Hearns-Andries, Whitaker-Mayweather.

Aug. 1987: Sugar Ray: Still In Style. Plus: Leonard-Hagler, all-time heavyweight ratings, Czyz-MacDonald, Camacho-Davis.

Sept. 1987: Michael Olajide: The Look Of The Future? Plus: Tyson-Thomas, Jeff Fenech, middleweight muddle, Tsuyoshi Hamada, Juan Roldan, Harold Knight.

Nov. 1987: Tyson Wins Heavyweight Triple Crown. Plus: McCallum-Curry, Carlos Monzon interview, triple champions, Orlin & Terry Norris, Ramirez-Alli, Fenech-Richardson, Matthew Hilton.

Dec. 1987: Spinks & Lewis: Boxing's Beastie Boys. Plus: Starling-Breland, Ramzi Hassan, Honeyghan-Hatcher, Holyfield-Ocasio.

Jan. 1988: Darrin Van Horn-Million Dollar Baby? Plus: Evander Holyfield, Hill-Stewart, Juan Coggi, great hookers, AIDS.

Feb. 1988: Gold Outshines Glitter: Tate Tops Olajide. Plus: Tyson-Biggs, Kalambay-Barkley, Hearns-Roldan, fights we'd like to see.

March 1988: Thomas "Hit Man" Hearns: "Now I Own History." Plus: Rocky Lockridge & Roger Mayweather, Panama, Tony Burton, Chavez-Rosario, Gervacio-Espinoza, Vaca-Honeyghan.

April 1988: Evander Holyfield: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Special year-end awards, Holyfield-Qawi II, Foreman-Sekorski, Hill-Angulo.

May 1988: George Foreman: "I Can Beat Tyson." Plus: Tyson-Holmes, Jesse Benavides, Showtime, no-knockout artists.

Aug. 1988: Julio Cesar Chavez: The Kid From Culiacan. Plus: Holyfield, bad decisions, Lockridge-Knight, Starling-Breland II, Brown-Trice, Haugen-Santana.

Sept. 1988: Sugar Ray: Here He Comes Again! Plus: Andries-Czyz, Kid Chocolate, Don Dunphy, Don Lalonde.

Oct. 1988: Mike Tyson: What Price Glory? Plus: Tyson-Spinks, Hearns-Barkley, Davey Moore.

Nov. 1988: Donny Lalonde: "Sugar Ray Is Out Of His Mind!" Plus: Hall of Fame selections (Carlos Ortiz, Joe Brown, Billy Graham, Cus D'Amato, Jimmy Jacobs), Nunn-Tate, Molinares-Starling, Honeyghan-Chung, '88 Olympians.

Jan. 1989: Meldrick Taylor: Philly Phenom. Plus: Marvin Hagler, Alex Wallau, Taylor-McGirt, Olympic results.

Feb. 1989: Julio Cesar Chavez. Plus: Chavez-Ramirez, all-time lightweight ratings, Louie Espinoza, Simon Brown, Roger Mayweather.

March 1989: Hearns Next For Sugar Ray? Plus: Leonard-Lalonde, Prince Charles Williams, Hearns-Kinchen, Nunn-Roldan, Hines-Hilton.

May 1989: The Best Of '88. Plus: Year-end awards, Evander Holyfield, Pryor-Morales, Fenech-Navarro.

Jan. 1990: Boxing's Bible Reborn At Age 88. Plus: Carlos Monzon, Mike Tyson, Leonard-Duran, Daniel Zaragoza, Nunn-Barkley, Whitaker-Ramirez, George Foreman (color).

Feb. 1990: Mike Tyson: Riddick Bowe & Ray Mercer Take Aim. Plus: Bobby Czyz, Gerry Cooney, Chuck Wepner, Antonio Esparragoza, Roman-Laciar.

March 1990: The '80s—Great Fights, Great Fighters (color). Plus: Jeff Harding, Evander Holyfield, Pete Rademacher, Sharkey-McCoy.

April 1990: Pernell Whitaker: Fighter Of The Year (color). Plus: Tiger Flowers, Duran-Leonard, Chavez-Taylor preview, Jorge Paez, Ali-Cooper.

May 1990: Big George Talks Tough: "Tyson Won't Be That Difficult!" Plus: Ed Hopson, Russian fighters, grudge wars, Archie Moore, Kid Berg, Marcel Cerdan, Chavez-Cortes.

June 1990: Buster! How James Douglas Shocked The World. Plus: Michael Moorer, Camacho-Paez, Tommy Farr, Excuses, Dick Tiger, Ruben Olivares-Jeff Chandler.

July 1990: "I'm Hungrier Than Ever Before," By Evander Holyfield. Plus: James Toney, Buddy McGirt, Glenwood Brown, Aaron Davis, Michael Carbajal, Jorge Paez, Kid Gavilan, Mark Breland, Ali-Liston II (color).

Aug. 1990: Chavez: His Greatness Confirmed ... Is He The Best Mexican Fighter Ever? Plus: Matthew Saad Muhammad, John L. Sullivan & Mike Tyson, Michael Nunn, Mark Breland, Harold Johnson, Cus D'Amato, Louis-Godoy (color).

Sept. 1990: Marvin Hagler-Can He Resist The Irresistible Temptation? Plus: Thomas Hearns, Sanchez-Saddler, Paul Banke, puncher vs. chin, Beau Jack, Robinson-LaMotta (color).

Oct. 1990: Rocky Graziano—Thanks For The Memories. Plus: Aaron Pryor, Junior Jones, Mike Tyson, Chris Eubank, Wolgast-Nelson, Hall of Fame.

Nov. 1990: Tyson vs. Foreman. Can Iron Mike Stop The Blast From The Past? Plus: Bruce Seldon, best chins, Sullivan-Kilrain (color), Azumah Nelson, LaStarza.

Dec. 1990: Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Douglas-Holyfield preview, Julio Cesar Chavez, Joe Grim, Whitaker-Nazario, Rosi-Van Horn, Benny Leonard, Douglas-Tyson (color).

Jan. 1991: Boxing's Baddest Bad Boy: Nigel Benn Plays By His Own Rules. Plus: Roberto Duran, Kid Akeem, Jose Napoles, Jimmy Carruthers, LaMotta-Zale, Dempsey-Willard (color).

Feb. 1991: Boxing On TV—Now You'll Pay! Plus: Ismael Laguna, Tommy Morrison in *Rocky V*, Reggie Tuur, Chiquita Gonzalez, Harold Green, Joe Louis.

March 1991: Hunger! It Made Evander A Champ, But ... Plus: Dempsey-Firpo, Charles Murray, Khaosai Galaxy, Nunn-Curry, Henry Armstrong, Sonny Liston (color).

April 1991: Julio Cesar Chavez—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Tyson-Stewart, James Leija, Wilfred Benitez, Pedro Decima, Moore-Bassey.

May 1991: Ali-Frazier I: 20 Years Late, Still The Fight Of The Century (color). Plus: fighting at home, Mark McPherson, George Costner, Rolando

Pascua, Tony Canzoneri.

June 1991: Pain, Frustration, Confidence, And Hope: Meldrick Taylor's Life After Chavez. Plus: Foreman-Holyfield preview, Norris-Leonard, David Kamau, Freddie Steele, Bennie Briscoe, Leonard's career (color).

July 1991: Tyson's Title Hopes: He Ain't What He Used To Be...But It's Not Gonna Matter. Plus: Eusebio Pedroza, Myung Woo Yuh, Willie Meehan, Hearns-Hill preview, computer junior welterweight tournament, Gomez-Fenech, controversial heavyweight finishes (color).

Aug. 1991: Foreman Gives Holyfield A Fight ... And The World A Thrill (color). Plus: Making weight, Harry Greb, Kevin Kelley, Louis-Conn I, Simon Brown-Blocker, Chavez-Duplessis, Sugar Ray Robinson.

Oct. 1991: A Hit Again-How Far Can Thomas Hearns Go? Plus: Battling Levinsky, Oba Carr, Dave McAuley, Muhammad Ali, Lou Ambers, Luther McCarty, ethnic matchups, computer light heavy tournament, Cerdan-Hagler, Rocky Marciano (color).

Nov. 1991: Mike Tyson's Fight For Greatness—Will November 8 Be His Moment? Plus: Edwin Rosario, Jeff Fenech, overrated/underrated, Giardello-Graham, Lennox Lewis, Marcel Cerdan, Leonard-Hearns I, heavyweight computer tournament, Ali portrait (color).

Dec. 1991: Evander Holyfield vs. Mike Tyson: Who Will Win And Why. Plus: Eddie Aliano, Jack Britton, Muhammad Ali, Pernell Whitaker, rating the 44 world champions, Marcel Cerdan, Henry Cooper, Ezzard Charles-Jersey Joe Walcott (color).

Jan. 1992: Our Exclusive Annual Report: The State Of The Game. Plus: Jerry Quarry, Julio Cesar Chavez, Mysterious Billy Smith, Joey Gamache, moving up in weight, Billy Conn-Michael Spinks, Joe Louis (color).

May 1992: James Toney—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Myung Woo Yuh, Khaosai Galaxy, Rocky Graziano, Billy Soose, Roy Jones, James Warring, Duran-Chavez, Marvin Hagler (color).

June 1992: What Now? Boxing Without Mike Tyson. Plus: Buck Smith, Liston-Foreman, Billy Graham, Holmes-Mercer, Enrique Pinder, Hilario Zapata, Toney-Tiberi, Benny Lynch, Tony DeMarco, Tyson centerfold (color).

July 1992: Does Larry Holmes Deserve A Title Shot? Plus: Nelson-Fenech II, Tracy Patterson, Kelley-Dorsey, fat fighters, Buchanan-Camacho, Holmes-Ali (color).

Aug. 1992: Holyfield-Holmes Prefight. Holmes: "I See Me Takin' Holyfield Outta There." Plus: Iran Barkley, Herbie Hide, George Foreman, Tex Cobb, Carnival of Champions, Harry Greb, Haugen-Mancini, Oscar De La Hoya, Gene Tunney (color).

Sept. 1992: Chavez: Unbeaten At 80-0, But What If He Had To Face These Guys? Plus: Bobby Czyz, Genaro Hernandez, Norris-Taylor, Tommy Gibbons, Sugar Ray Leonard's career, Sugar Ray Robinson (color).

Oct. 1992: The Supreme Dream: The Heavyweight Hopes Of The Heavyweight Hopefuls. Plus: Kevin Kelley, All-Time Top 10: South Africa, Meldrick Taylor, Sharmba Mitchell, Bob Foster, Eder Jofre, Max Baer (color).

Nov. 1992: Is Riddick Bowe The Next Heavyweight Champion? Plus: Morrison-Hipp, Canizales-Chandler, Chavez-Camacho preview, Australia Best of Nation, Tyson speaks from prison, Corbett-Sullivan (color), Tracy Patterson, Pat Barrett, Knockout Brown.

Feb. 1993: America's Tribute To The Brown Bomber: Joe Louis. Plus: Virgil Hill, Junior Jones, Roger Mayweather, Chicago boxing, Orlando Zulueta, Jose Napoles (color).

March 1993: From Question Man To Answer Man: Riddick Bowe Leaves No Doubts. Plus: Lennox Lewis, Lopez-Gamache, Frank Bruno, Rocky Kansas, Frank Fletcher, Crisanto Espana, Bowe-Lewis (color).

April 1993: Riddick Bowe: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: "Grand Slam" fight card, Toney-Barkley preview, Morris East, Joe Louis-John Henry Lewis, All-Time Top 10: Argentina, Fighters of the Year (color).

Aug. 1993: A Ring Exclusive: Julio Cesar Chavez Speaks Out. Plus: Bobby Czyz, 10 hardest punchers, Rafael Ruelas, Carmen Basilio, closing of the Fifth Street Gym, Sugar Ray Leonard (color).

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April 1994: Michael Carbajal: Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Brown-Norris, Kevin Kelley, Ceferino Garcia, Oscar De La Hoya, Tunney Hunsaker, Spinks-Foster.

May 1994 (92-Page Special) Division-By-Division: The Greatest Fighters Of All-Time. Plus: Virgil Hill & Orlando Canizales, Kostya Tszyu, James Toney, What If ... Dempsey vs. Wills.

June 1994: Moorer-Holyfield: Slugfest Or Stinker? Plus: Terry Norris, Paul Pender, Randall-Chavez I, Gonzales-Carbajal II, kickboxing.

July 1994: "I Wanna Be Like Sugar Ray": Oscar De La Hoya Becomes A Prime-Time Player. Plus: Nigel Benn, Gianfranco Rosi, Sullivan-McCaffrey, Donald-Williams, 10 likely upsets, All-Time Top 10: England.

Aug. 1994: Bowe's Back! Determined To Do It Again. Plus: Eric Griffin, Pernell Whitaker, Ray Mercer, Roger Donoghue, State of the Game (midterm report), All-Time Top 10: The Philippines.

Oct. 1994: Rating The Champs: Whitaker & Toney Lead The Field ... But Roy Jones Is Closing Fast. Plus: Oscar De La Hoya, Meldrick Taylor, Rafael Ruelas, Curtis Cokes.

Nov. 1994: With Lewis Fighting Bowe ... Is Michael Moorer's Career Off-Target? Plus: Wayne McCullough, Hall of Fame, Alejandro Lavorante, Rocky Marciano, Paz-Duran, Injuries (part I), What If ... Pedroza vs. Sanchez.

Dec. 1994: Fighting-Mad! James Toney Just Wants To Beat People Up. Plus: Duran & Robinson, Don King, Mike McCallum, Injuries (part II), Tom Molineaux.

Jan. 1995: A Puncher's Dream: Oliver McCall Upsets Boxing's Balance Of Power. Plus: Ruelas brothers, Quincy Taylor, "Unfinished Business," Dave Maier, All-Time Top 10: Canada.

Feb. 1995: Return To Greatness? Mike Tyson Doesn't Know His Future ... But *The Ring* Does! Plus: Pernell Whitaker, Lennox Lewis, Mark Johnson, Orlando Canizales, Tom Johnson, Irving Cohen.

March 1995 (92-Page Special): Through The Years: The Incredible Career(s) Of George Foreman. Plus: Jones-Toney, Ali in China, Chiquita-Carbajal III, Hank Kaplan.

May 1995: The State Of The Game. Plus: Olzubek & Arbachakov, Gonzalez-Kelley, Pazienza-Duran II, All-Time Top 10: France.

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July 1995: Pernell Whitaker: *The Ring* Makes "Pound-For-Pound" An Official Title. Plus: Riddick Bowe, Ike Quartey, Benn-McClellan, TV prospects, Hector Acero-Sanchez, Harry Matthews, What If ... Robinson-Burley.

Aug. 1995: Can Tyson Go From Great To All-Time Great? Plus: Antonio Barrera, Collins-Eubanks, Johnny Paychek, McCall-Holmes.

Sept. 1995: Bona Fide Superstar: Oscar Is The Boxer For The '90s. Plus: George Foreman, Danny Romero, Vincent Pettway, Lou Ambers, George Latka, What If ... McCallum-Hearns.

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Dec. 1995: McNeeley Goes Too Soon—Mike Tyson: The Beast Is Yet To Come. Plus: Tommy Morrison, Naseem Hamed, Chiquita Gonzalez, Gaspar Ortega, best chins.

Winter 1995 (92-Page Special): Buster Mathis Jr.: "Mike Tyson, You Got A Fight Comin' On." Plus: Holyfield-Bowe III preview, Wayne McCullough, Jesse James Hughes, Norris-Vaden preview, *The Ring* Insiders' Poll, What If ... Moore-Ayala Jr.

Jan. 1996: Go East, Young Man: Oscar De La Hoya—Making All The Right Moves Plus: Julio Cesar Chavez, Bruno & Eubank, who's hot & who's not, Eddie Perkins.

Feb. 1996: Bowe's The Man (For Now), But Is He Man Enough For Tyson? Also: Lennox Lewis, Hamed-Barrera, Paul Banke, Vince Phillips, boxing on Madison Ave., What If ... Leonard-Pryor.

April 1996: Oscar De La Hoya—Fighter Of The Year. Plus: Mike Tyson, Gabe Ruelas, 1995 in review, All-Time Top 10: Africa.

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Holiday 1996 (92-Page Special): Tyson-Holyfield. Finally! Plus: Ali, Paz-Rosenblatt, 100 greatest title fights of all-time, Stillman's gym.

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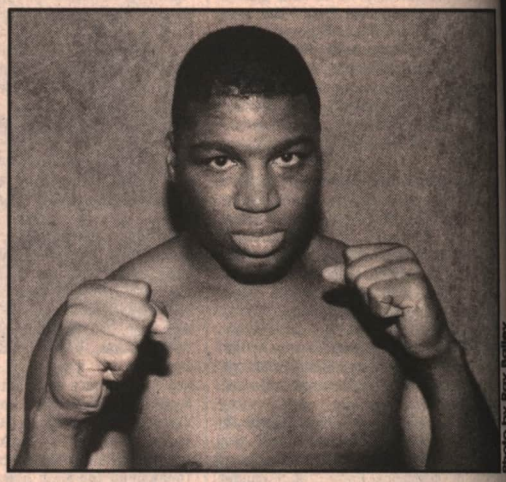
By Joe Santoliquito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PRO RECORD

1997		
July 5	William McDonald, Moline, IL	KO 1
July 20	Jason Farley, Indio, CA	KO 2
Aug. 23	Bryant Smith, Atlantic City	KO 2
Sept. 23	Dan Conway, Ledyard, CT	KO 3
Oct. 3	Tony LaRosa, Atlantic City	KO 3
Nov. 18	Louis Monaco, Pikesville, MD	W 8
1998		
Jan. 16	Mario Cawley, Atlantic City	KO 2

FIGHTS	WON	LOST	DREW	KOs
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Lawrence Clay-Bey saw the opportunities around him begin to slip away. He lived on the same Hartford, Connecticut, street as Eugene Robinson, who went on to play for the Seattle Seahawks and world champion Green Bay Packers in the NFL. Robinson's success forced Clay-Bey to think about the football scholarships he rejected coming out of high school.

Clay-Bey, 32, had to know. He didn't want to wonder anymore about the woulda, coulda, and shouldas. He'd always regretted not pursuing football, and didn't want to have the same feeling about boxing. So almost a year after becoming an Olympian in 1996, Clay-Bey decided to turn pro.

Olympian Clay-Bey overwhelmed Tony LaRosa

Photo by Frank Vitucci

So far, Clay-Bey seems to have made a sound choice. He has begun his pro career with seven straight wins, six by knockout. He's demonstrated fast hands, knockout power, and a relaxed demeanor that belies his ferocity once he has his man in trouble. He possesses good physical skills, and is rapidly improving.

Of course, he has not really been tested yet. In his most recent fight, January 16 at Trump Marina in Atlantic City, Clay-Bey made easy work of late replacement Mario Cawley, knocking him out in the second round with a sharp right uppercut to the temple. Even so, it was obvious during the Cawley fight that Clay-Bey is still getting used to the pro game. There were times when he held his arms up on the break, an amateur habit that could be dangerous against a seasoned pro.

But for the most part, Clay-Bey appeared comfortable. He moved well, stalking

(Continued on page 65)

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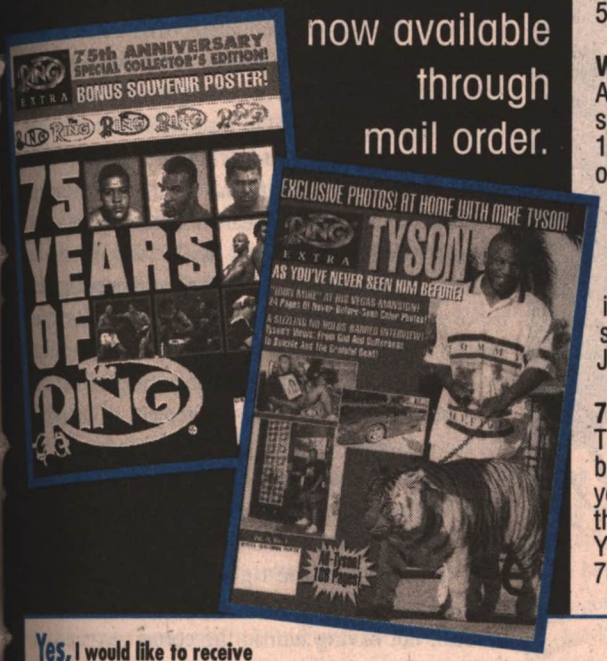

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RYAN OUT LOUD

By Jeff Ryan

STEADY EDDIE

A dozen years ago, when Eddie Futch was a mere babe of 74, he stopped at a Las Vegas supermarket on his way home from a wedding. Returning to his Mercedes, he discovered it was blocked in by a twentysomething punk whose sorry parking skills were exceeded only by his sorrier attitude. Futch nicely asked the guy to move the obstructing vehicle. The response was a profanity-laced refusal. So Futch poked a left jab through his tormentor's open window.

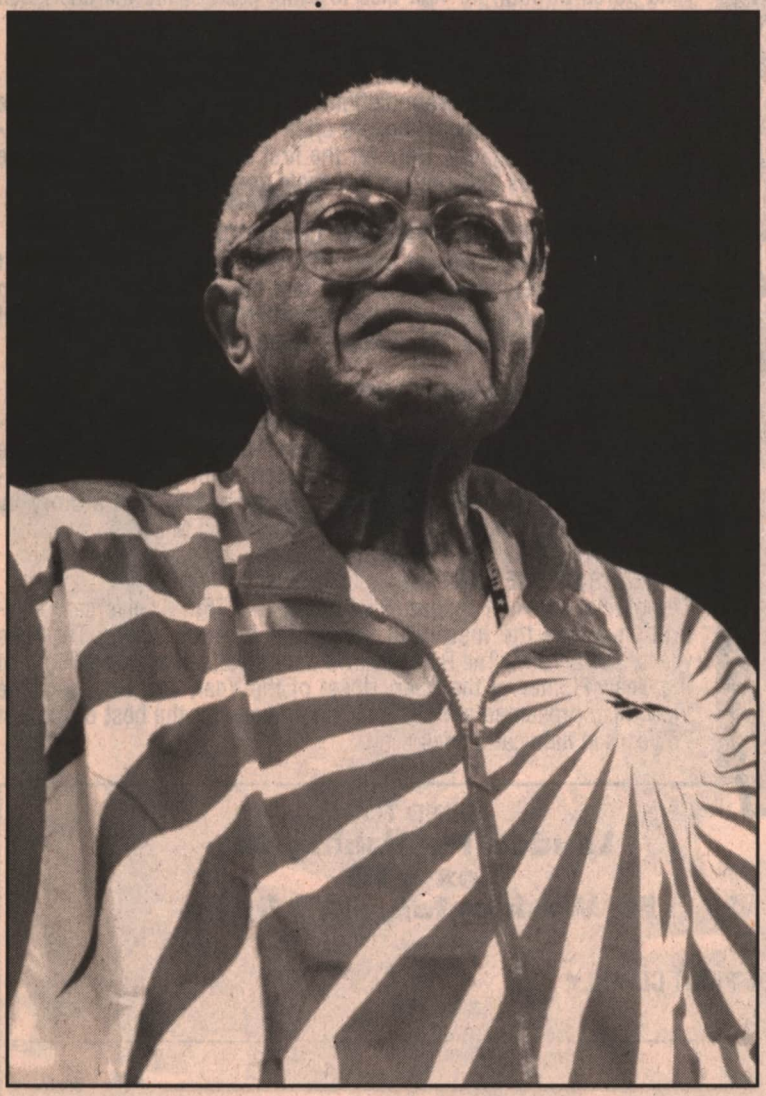
The guy got out of the car, and the ensuing conversation went something like this:

Punk: "Old guys like you got no business throwing punches at anybody."

Futch: "Move that car or I'm going to throw another one."

Punk: "I'd like to see you try it."

Futch feinted, the younger man launched a right, and Futch ducked it and countered with a left hook to the noggin. The result: a broken finger for Futch, but a suddenly cleared route out of the parking lot.



Futch walked away from boxing recently after more than six decades in the business. The 86-year-old trainer of 22 world champions will be remembered as one of the most genuine, honorable figures in the history of the sport.

It may seem a bit odd to lead off a column on one of the true gentlemen in boxing with a story about him streetfighting. But anyone who is lucky enough to know Futch, and has heard the parking lot story, probably ranks that battle with "The Thrilla In Manila," Hagler-Hearns, and Gomez-Pintor on their list of personal favorites. If Eddie Futch ever got mad enough to pop somebody, trust me, they deserved it.

In January, Futch, quite possibly the greatest trainer in history, announced his retirement at the age of 86. He says goodbye after six decades in boxing, and with 22 world champions on his resume. The Father Time of the fight game had reduced his workload in recent years, and was finally slowing down. And if anyone has earned the right to get away from the craziness of his industry, it's Futch.

Still, not having him in the corner anymore will feel awfully weird because the sport's roster of nice guys isn't deep enough to be unaffected by the departure of one of its starting five.

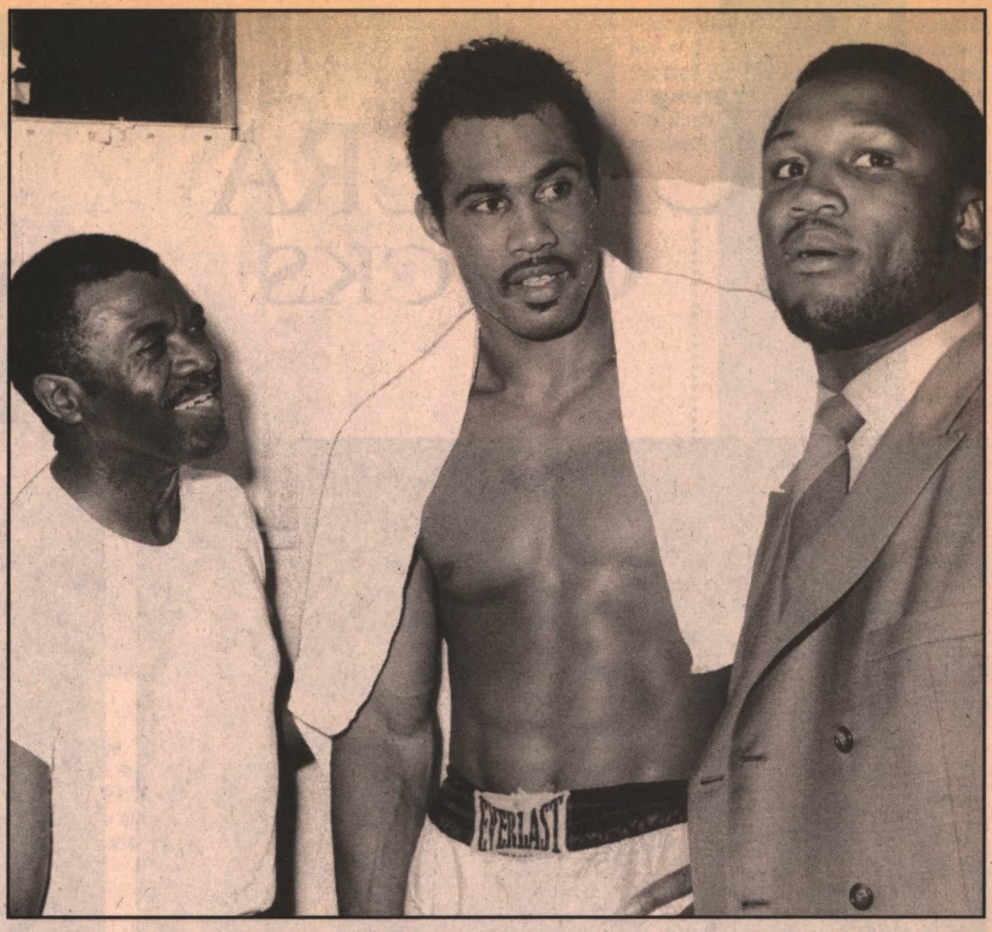
As Emanuel Steward once said of Futch, "Never heard a bad word spoken about the man. And in a business like this, that's something."

And it's not because Futch has been a suck-up. He isn't liked and respected because he walks around blowing smoke up everyone's trunks and playing the role of diplomat. Although he won't go out of his way to take verbal blasts at people, ask him his opinion

about something and he'll answer the only way he can: honestly. There are never any agendas, hidden or openly displayed.

During my 14 years on the beat, there have been more entertaining interview subjects. Larry Holmes is always great for a dozen outrageous quotes. Vinny Pazienza keeps you in as many stitches as his plastic surgeon has kept him in. And you never know which planet Hector Camacho is going to fly in from just in time for our sit-down. But with the possible exception of Archie Moore, no boxing figure has kept me glued to his every word the way Futch has.

That's why I tried not to waste his time, or cheat myself, by asking him if the WBC should be abolished or if Naseem Hamed deserves an HBO contract. Instead, I asked him how he could guide an unknown Ken Norton to an upset of Muhammad Ali. (Norton jabbed at the same time Ali jabbed, disrupting "The Greatest's" rhythm.) Or what it was like to spar with Joe Louis. (When he was sharp enough to hit the lightweight Futch, "The Brown Bomber" said, he knew he was sharp enough to hit anyone.) Or why he chose to work with Riddick Bowe when other trainers were scared away. (He was impressed that Bowe never succumbed to the drugs and violence in his Brooklyn neighborhood.)



A younger Futch stands beside two of the six heavyweights he led to world titles, Ken Norton and Joe Frazier. Norton upset Muhammad Ali in their first fight in 1973, and "Smokin' Joe" handed Ali his first defeat two years earlier, making Futch, in a sense, the only man to beat Ali twice.

Often, you just let Futch talk. He was the first person to tell me that, despite three years of rest and the weakened state of the division he was returning to, Mike Tyson wouldn't be anything close to the fighter he was before he went to prison. The single stupidest thing Tyson ever did in his pro career is not hire Futch, who before Tyson aligned himself with Don King, would have taken the job.

Everyone remembers how Futch compassionately stopped Joe Frazier's rubber match with Ali, but I once watched a 75-year-old Futch hustle as best he could onto the ring apron to rescue James Kinchen from the fists of Juan Roldan, a beating that neither the referee nor anyone else made a move to halt. And Futch told me of the time he stopped a Hedgemon Lewis fight just 30 seconds before the final bell. Lewis hadn't even gone down, and was winning on the cards, but Futch sensed that he could no longer defend himself and never thought twice about making the move.

Nowadays, we talk about "character" and "integrity" if someone in the fight game actually honors a contract or doesn't try to steal part of a fighter's purse. But Futch has always displayed real character and integrity. He turned down the chance to make $800,000 for the two Michael Spinks-Larry Holmes bouts because he trained both men and wasn't about to work only one of the corners. He refused to train Livingstone Bramble after determining that anyone arrogant enough to badmouth the legendary Alexis Arguello was not someone he wanted to be around.

And he had the principles to get out of the Bowe camp when he became convinced that the overhyped heavyweight had no intention of ever getting himself into peak condition or taking his job as seriously as Futch took his. (No doubt, not wanting to have to duck flying chairs and deal with Team Bowe's payrolled goons at the age of eightysomething played a part in the decision, too.)

Futch deserves a good rest of his life because he has made the lives of anyone he has met in boxing a little bit happier. Acknowledging what knowing him meant to one particular journalist is something I should have done in this column a long time ago. It shouldn't have had to wait for his retirement. Hopefully, this doesn't read like an obituary, because Eddie Futch has a lot more war stories left in him. And his phone number isn't being scratched out of my Filofax anytime soon.

So Futch gets to leave this nutty business on his terms. Next up, according to him, is spending a lot more time with his family.

Nice guys don't always finish last. Sometimes, they just finish. ■

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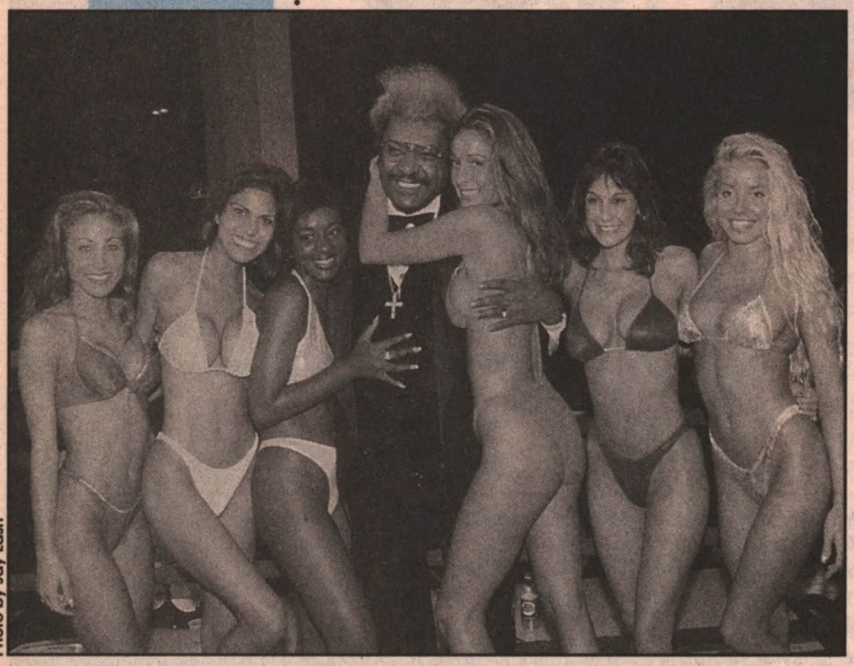


Photo by Jay Lash

Power has its privileges: Don King gets up close and personal with a half-dozen round card girls at a recent fight card in Pompano Beach, Florida. While debate has been ongoing for years over whether King's hairstyle is a natural phenomenon, one suspects that it might not be the only artificially inflated physical attribute on display in this photo.

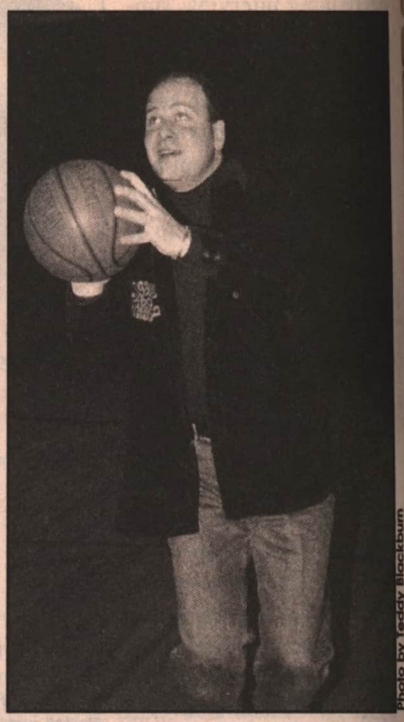


Photo by Teddy Blackburn

"If Roy Jones can do it, so can I": HBO Sports Vice President Lou DiBella finds a moment to get away from the rigors of the boxing business and work on his jumpshot.

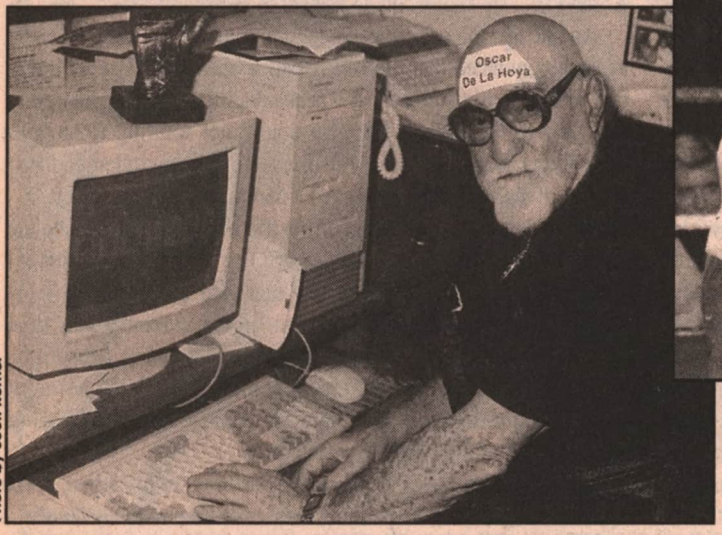


Photo by Scott Romer

Not even the map of the Philippines on Mikhail Gorbachev's forehead can compare with this birthmark on cutman Chuck Bodak's pate. Even when he's simply relaxing in front of a game of computer solitaire, Bodak's still got his fighters on his mind.

Photo courtesy of Jimmy Adams man-

The Oliver McCall comeback continues, and any tomato can will do. Here, "The Atomic Bull" lands a powerful right hand to the jaw of his not-quite-heavyweight son, and the boy responds in proper McCall fashion: by crying.

Photo by Ray Bailey

Prior to his January 13 third-round knockout of Sam Girard, Cub Master Israel Cardona poses with the scouts he works with, Hartford, Connecticut's Cub Pack 49. Needless to say, Cardona had his opponent well "scouted."

Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

Trying to illustrate to his charge, Naseem Hamed, that a little dancing may have worked better against Kevin Kelley than sticking his chin out the way he did, trainer Brendan Ingle does the twist at the postfight press conference.

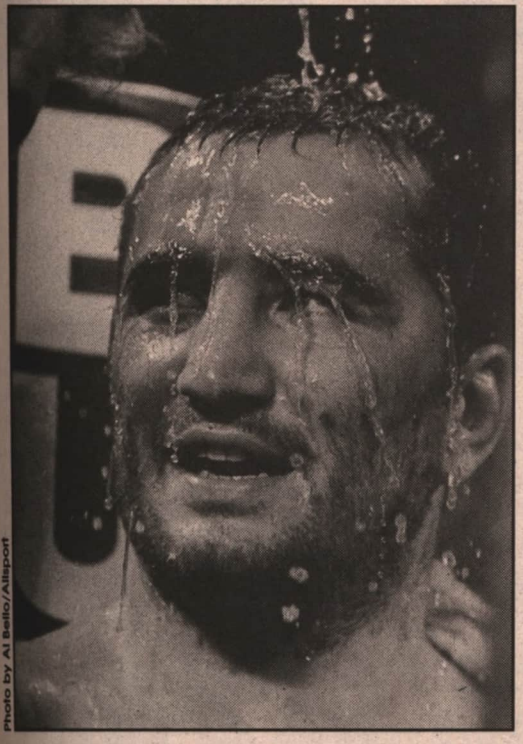


Photo by Al Bello/Allsport

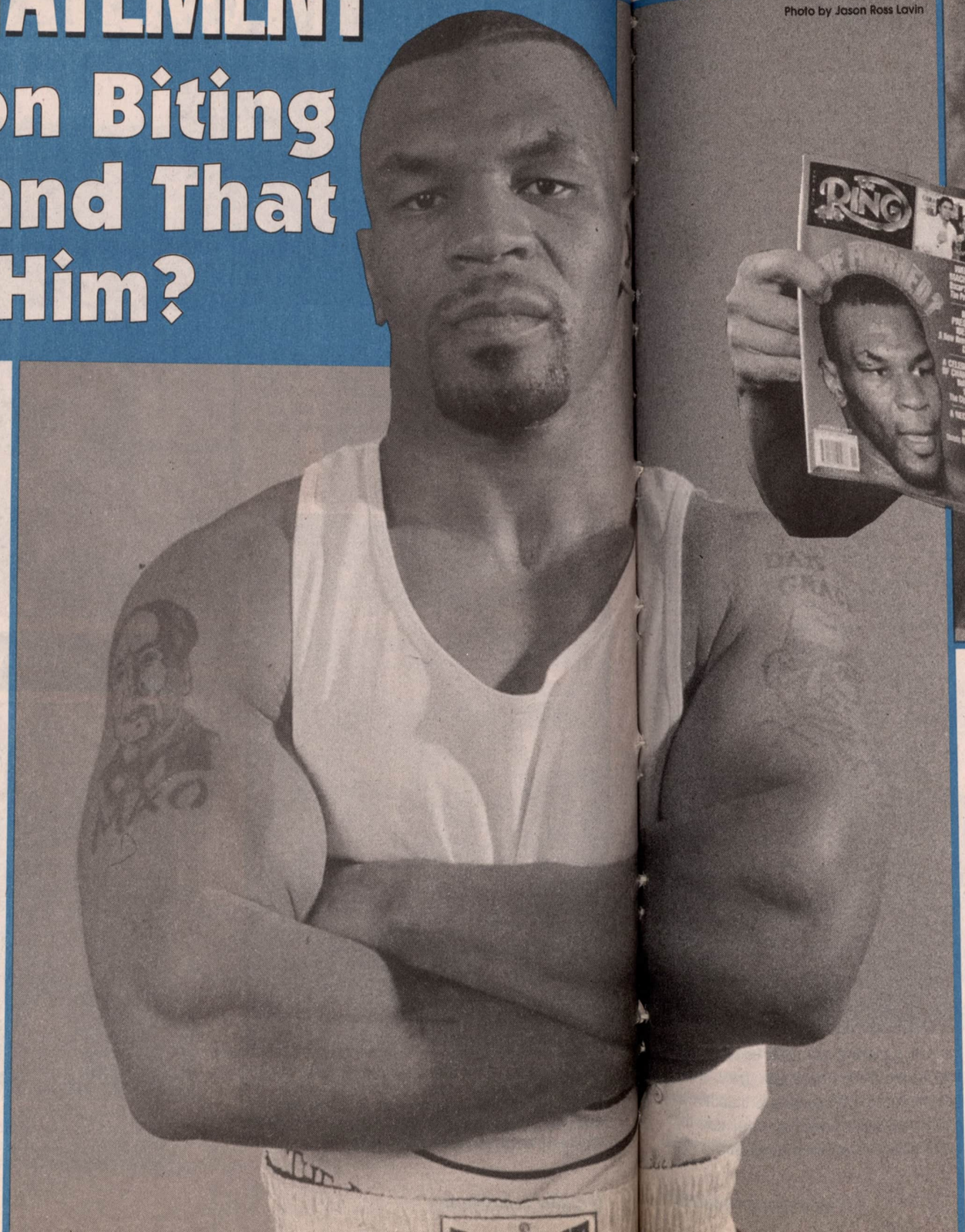
Between rounds of his WBA cruiserweight title victory in November, Fabrice Tiozzo's cornermen douse the Frenchman with water to cool him off. If only his opponent, Nate Miller, had bothered to work up a sweat, then he too might have had some use for a drenching.

NOSTALGIA CORNER

When Emile Griffith and Joe Frazier were told by their trainers that they needed to work on their rhythm, they both misinterpreted the instruction a bit. With Griffith on the bass and "Smokin' Joe" playing the drums, this is one rhythm section you don't want to mess with.

WRESTLING WITH HIS REINSTATEMENT

Is Tyson Biting The Hand That Feeds Him?



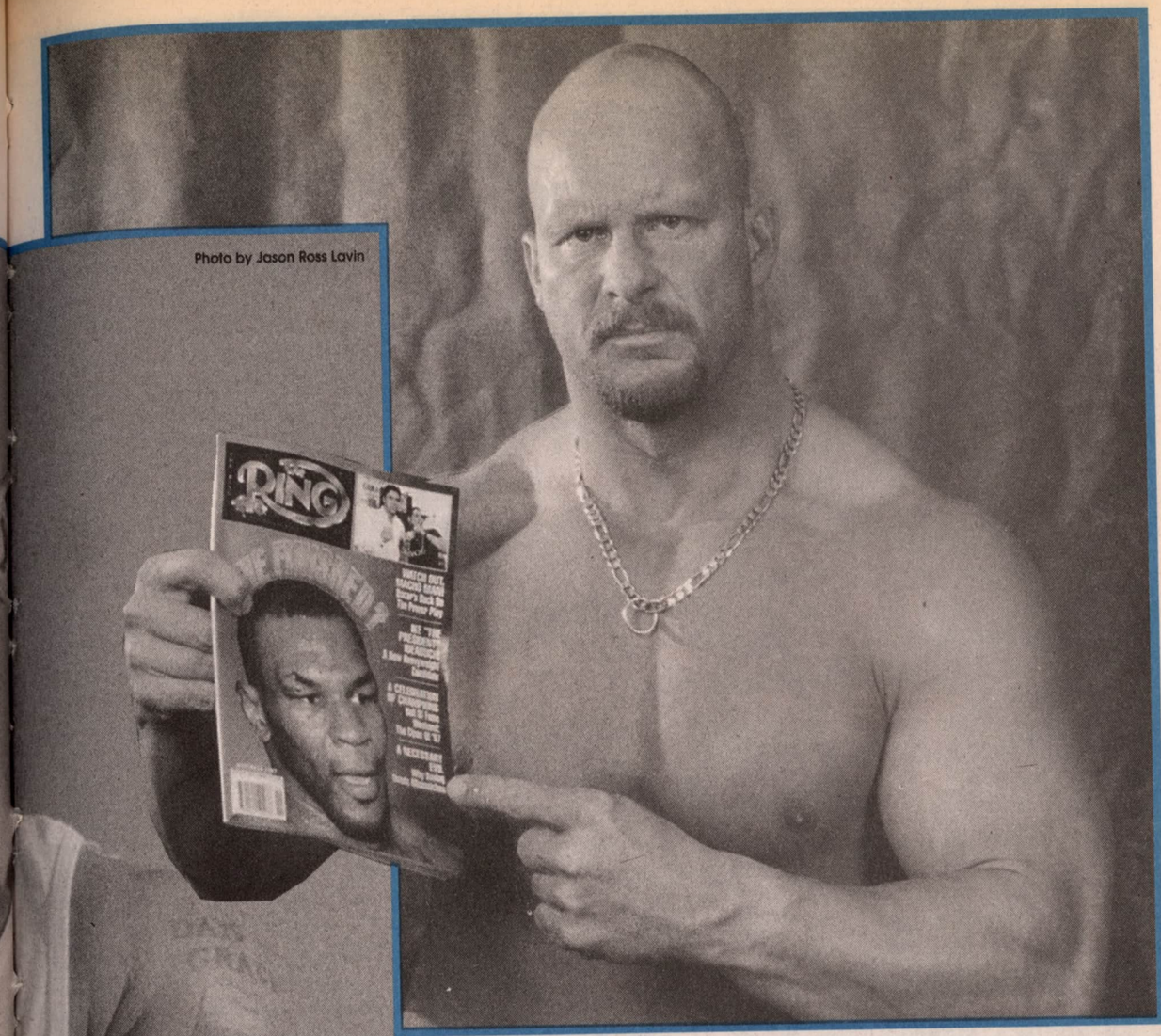


Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

Photo by Bill Apter

Professional wrestler "Stone Cold" Steve Austin points to the man he'd like to mangle. The pair became involved in a shouting and shoving match when Tyson appeared live on the World Wrestling Federation's January 19 Raw Is War telecast.

By Johnnie Whitehead

It was about a subtle as a left hook from Tennessee, a punch so telegraphed that even a British heavyweight could've seen it coming. With every step Mike Tyson took, from his appearance at the World Wrestling Federation's Royal Rumble on January 18 to the moment he casually strutted to the ring to be interviewed during *Raw Is War* the following night, he was setting the stage for even greater involvement in the weird world of professional wrestling. Now he's ready to rumble, ready to fulfill a childhood fantasy and make millions in the process on March 29 at WrestleMania XIV.

Of more pressing concern to boxing fans, however, is whether Tyson's dalliance with pro wrestling will jeopardize his standing with the Nevada State Athletic Commission, which revoked his license last July (for at least a year) after he dined on Evander Holyfield's ears.

"It's real, real simple," said Marc Ratner, the commission's executive director, who, incidentally, does not have a vote on Tyson's reinstatement. "Wrestling and boxing are two separate entities. We cannot tell him what to do, except not box. So if he wants to appear on *Saturday Night Live*, *20/20*, or WrestleMania, it's up to him and his advisers. We don't regulate wrestling. We collect taxes on it. It's an entirely scripted event."

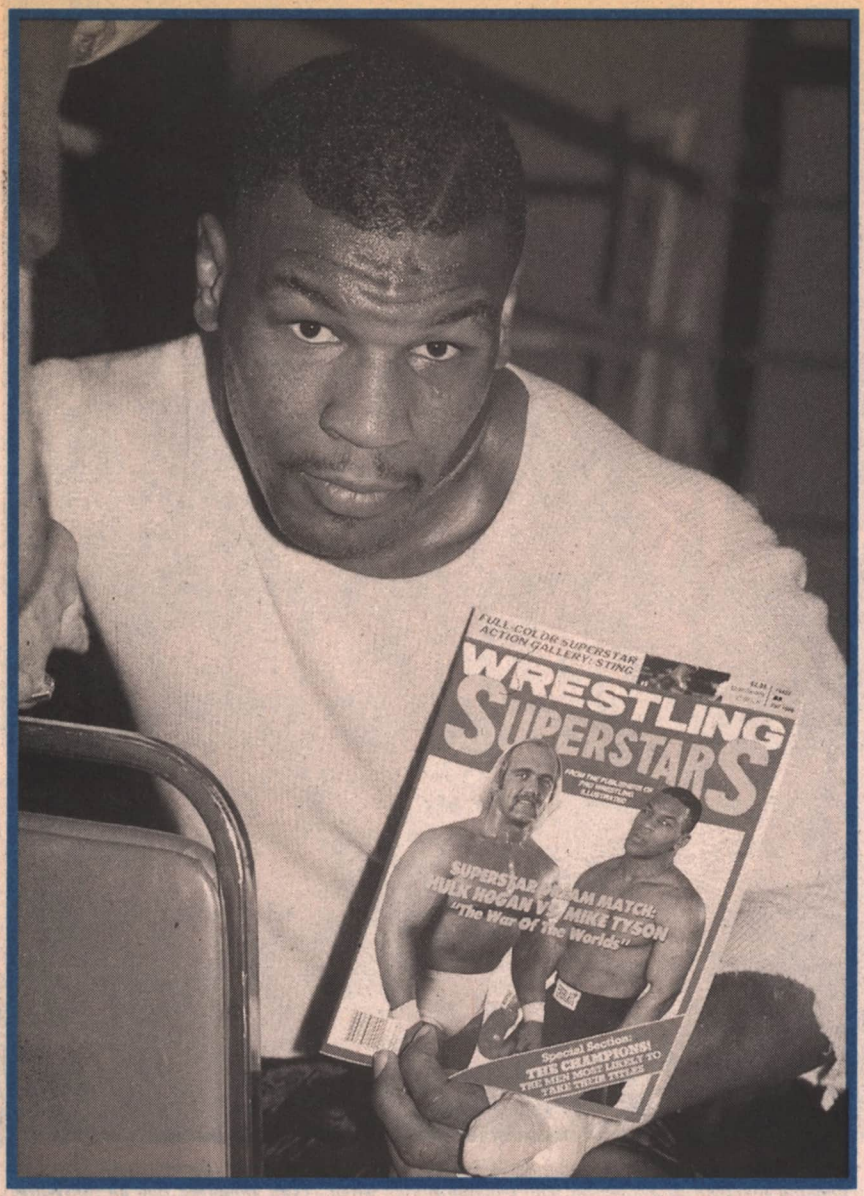
A recent article in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* polled the five commissioners who will vote on Tyson's reinstatement. Three had no comment, one said he did not like the idea of Tyson wrestling, and one said he did not have a problem with it.

"We have no jurisdiction," said commission chairman Elias Ganhem. "He's sticking by that [the suspension]. I hope he does. Maybe he's changing careers."

"There's no way in the world he will wrestle, because he does not want to jeopardize his relationship with the Nevada boxing commission," Tyson adviser Sig Rogich said before Tyson appeared on *Raw*. But after exchanging a few tasteless words with fan favorite "Stone Cold" Steve Austin during the program, Tyson found himself shoving the wrestling superstar at ring center. Then, toward the end of the show, he engaged in some almost comical banter.

"He embarrassed me in front of my kids, my wife," said Tyson.

The only thing missing was an ear bite and Tyson's co-manager, John Horne, pitching a fit and punctuating his disjointed English with four-letter words. The erstwhile "Baddest Man On The Planet," however, had no problem playing the role. Political correctness? Forget it.



Tyson poses with the Fall 1988 issue of Wrestling Superstars that featured him and Hulk Hogan on the cover. Iron Mike has been a wrestling fan since he was a kid.

"Bring Stone's faggot ass out here," Tyson said. "You faggot."

This was exactly the sort of hype the WWF was looking for, and the organization quickly announced that instead of being a guest referee, the two-time former heavyweight champion had accepted a challenge to step into the ring.

"Mike is refusing to guest referee," said WWF owner Vince McMahon. "Austin embarrassed Mike Tyson and the WWF with his remarks. Mike is now saying he wants 'Stone Cold' Steve Austin." McMahon also said he would ask the Nevada boxing commission if they would let Tyson wrestle.

"That's just WWF talk," said Ratner. "I talked with the WWF two months ago. Tyson's people did ask me, and I gave them the same answer: As long as he doesn't box, the commission can't tell him what to do."

During Tyson's WWF appearance, struggling to hold back his laughter appeared much tougher than absorbing one of Holyfield's left hooks. O.J. will find those "real" killers and Shaquille O'Neal will ace voice and diction before Iron Mike wins any acting accolades. Ultimately, though, the joke will be on those who buy the pay-per view if they actually expect a real competition.

Although Tyson is being paid a reported $3-million, the income couldn't compare to what he'd make if and when he steps back into boxing. Be it a steel cage, Texas death, or come-dressed-as-you-are bunkhouse match, he wouldn't draw anywhere near the estimated $140-million he made for six

A SAD HISTORY

Money for nothing? Perhaps. Everything—and seemingly almost everyone in boxing—has a price.

While the World Wrestling Federation's hype machine is billing Mike Tyson's appearance at WrestleMania XIV this March as the greatest show on earth, the circus refrain should be an annoyingly familiar one to boxing fans by now. If it wasn't beneath boxing gods such as Jack Dempsey, Joe Louis, and Muhammad Ali to engage in boxer vs. wrestler skits, why not America's favorite bad boy/cash cow?

"It's strictly for the money," said boxing historian Hank Kaplan. "It's just a carnival act."

Tyson, an admitted wrestling fan, had a chance to star for the WWF way back in February 1990, but that was spoiled when Buster Douglas upset him in Tokyo for the undisputed title. Instead, Douglas was a guest referee for the Hulk Hogan-Randy Savage match that was televised on NBC. The result: Savage, unknowingly paving the way for the Bruce Seldons of the boxing world, was kayoed by a Douglas punch that missed by at least a foot.

Tyson is far from alone in his wrestling exploits. Probably to no one's surprise, four-round king Butterbean is under contract for future shows with the WWF. After fighting on the Oscar De La Hoya-Wilfredo Rivera card in Atlantic City, New Jersey, in December, The Beanster "fought" a wrestler, Marc Mero, at a WWF event the next day.

"I'll be into it more than [Tyson] is," said Butterbean. "I don't know how Tyson is going to handle it, because people don't like him. People like me."

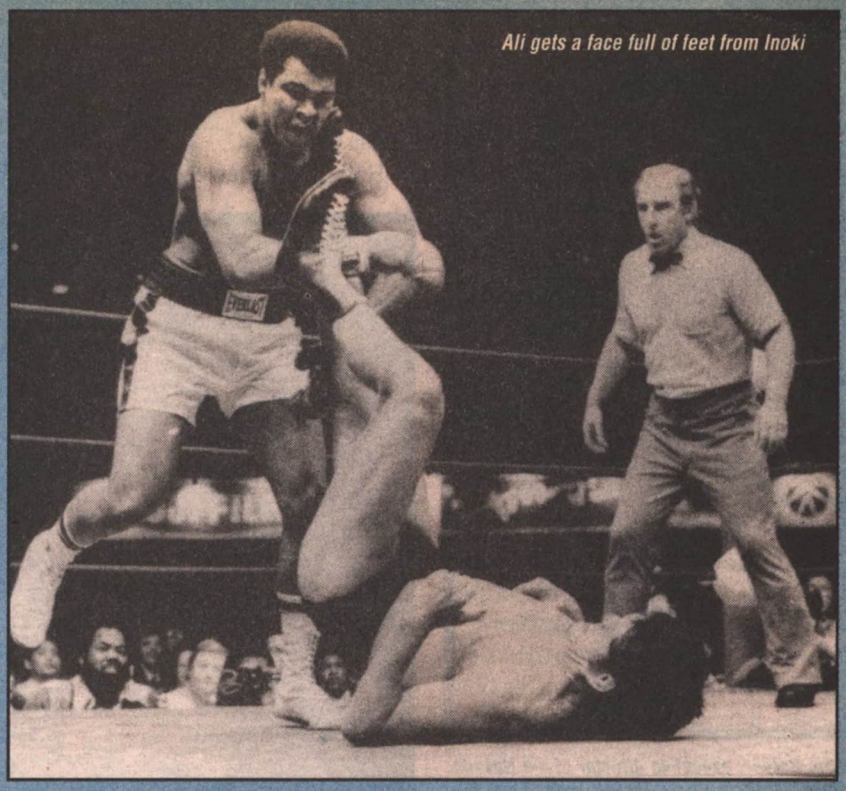
Tyson, however, should take note of Ali's painful flirtation with wrestling. In 1976, Ali incurred severe injuries to his left leg after Japanese grappler Antonio

Inoki laid on his back and kicked at the boxer's legs for 15 rounds during their match in Tokyo.

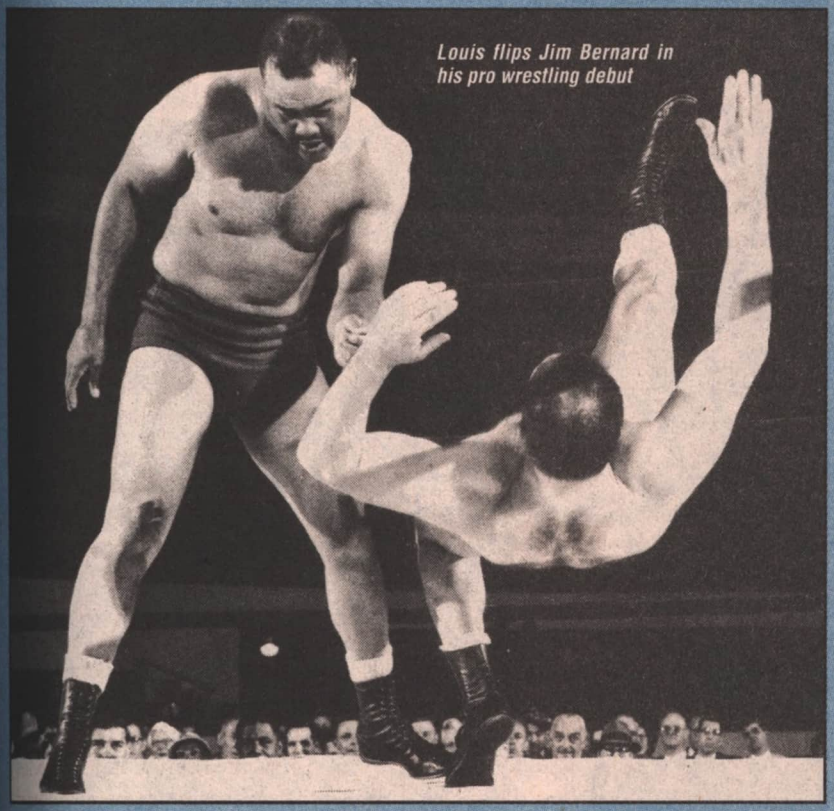
"With Ali, he just got a big kick out of it," said Ali's trainer, Angelo Dundee, whose fighter pocketed $2.2-million for the monumental bore with Inoki that ended in a draw. "With Ali, I actually had meetings with [WWF owner] Vince McMahon [Sr.], and we had set rules. That was thrown out the window when Muhammad said [to Inoki], 'I'm going knock you out.' It almost turned into a tragedy."

How bad was it? Even "Sideshow Bob" Arum, Butterbean's promoter, called Ali's foray into wrestling "embarrassing." Even so, the worst sight of all may have been watching a shopworn Louis, no longer able to box and flat broke, wrestling to pay his unending debts to the IRS.

With so much easy money involved, many other notable boxers crossed over to clash with the men in tights. Primo Carnera, widely considered one of the worst heavyweight champions of all-time,



Ali gets a face full of feet from Inoki



Louis flips Jim Bernard in his pro wrestling debut

was probably the most successful of the boxers who turned to wrestling when their gloved careers were over. Other notable boxers who have either wrestled or refereed wrestling matches include John L. Sullivan, Battling Siki, Tony Galento, Archie Moore, Jersey Joe Walcott, Joe Frazier, Leon Spinks, Chuck Wepner, Scott LeDoux, Alfredo Escalera, Matthew Saad Muhammad, Roberto Duran, James Warring, Trevor Berbick, Earnie Shavers, and Rocky Marciano. More are certain to follow. And while they may have made a few bucks, grovelling on the canvas has never been good for a boxer's reputation.

"Boxing fans are not wrestling fans," said Kaplan. "Boxing fans hold wrestling as we know it in contempt."

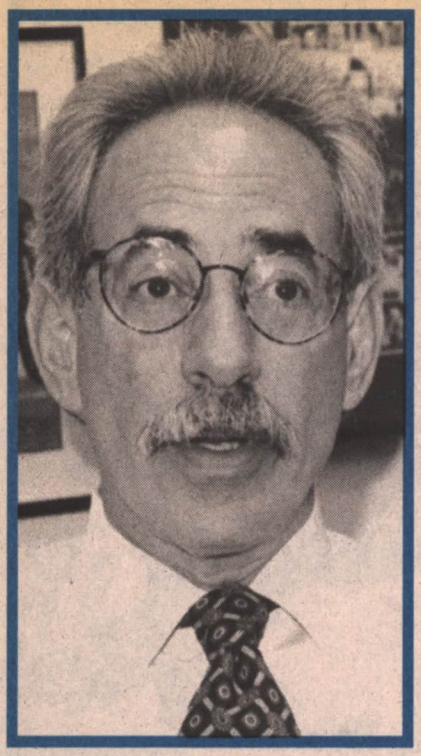
But as far as Tyson's case is concerned, perhaps Butterbean summed it up best when he said: "A lot of big names have done it in the past. There's a lot of similarities. Look at Tyson-Bruno. Boxing fans know who's going to win. So Tyson's going to fit right in with wrestling."

—JW

fights upon his release from prison.

Some suggest that the whole wrestling episode is just a ploy by Tyson to keep his name out there while biding his time before returning to boxing, knowing that the public understands it's all in good fun and that his image can only get better. Or maybe he realizes that the cash spigot will dry up soon and he must milk it for all it's worth while he can.

Dino Duva, Lennox Lewis' American promoter, told the New York *Daily News* he believed Tyson wants to box, "but somehow it seems like he belongs in wrestling. I think Tyson wants a third



Marc Ratner, executive director of the Nevada State Athletic Commission, says that the commission has no jurisdiction over Tyson's "entirely scripted" wrestling career.

Holyfield fight. He's wrestling just to keep in the public eye and make some money."

Regardless, it is clear that Tyson's public rehabilitation is in full swing. Whereas he was surly and carried a me-against-the-world chip on his shoulder and painted everyone in the press with the same sinister brush, he now looks to them to help rebuild his relationship with the paying audience. He granted ABC an interview in November, then followed it by answering an hour's worth of questions from Larry King on CNN.

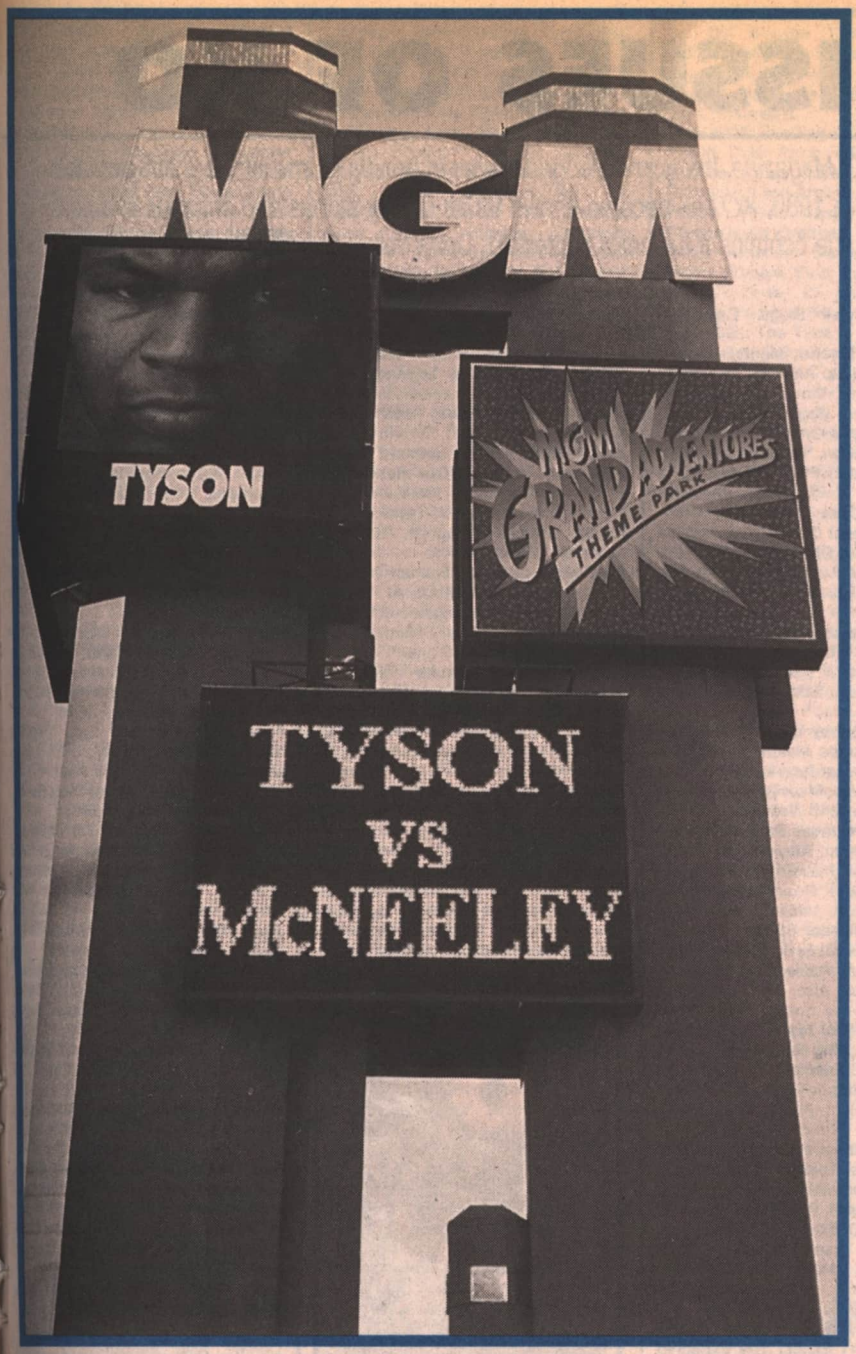
Tyson has increased his pace of training in Phoenix, Arizona, amid growing optimism that his ban will be lifted July 9. If successful, sports fans—especially those in boxing—can be the most forgiving. So what does that add up to?

Grab a hold of your checkbooks and try Tyson-Holyfield III, coming soon at a premium price to a PPV outlet near you. A third fight with "The Real Deal" probably would surpass the $30-million Tyson made when he was disqualified last June against Holyfield. Even King couldn't talk his way out of that likelihood. Not that he ever wanted to.

"Tyson-Holyfield III would be the biggest fight in history," the promoter said. "This fight isn't about titles, it's about blood, something that would have the people going crazy if it happened in the Roman Colosseum."

Holyfield knows that he can't make anywhere near the kind of loot he can make with Tyson against all the rest of the contenders to his throne combined. He even seems to have rationalized a way to sell a third fight. At least he has himself convinced, and that's half the battle.

Now here's a real super heavyweight. Tyson enjoys a laugh with sumo wrestler Konioshiki while in Tokyo for his March 1988 title defense against Tony Tubbs.



No fighter can fill seats and lure high rollers to Las Vegas as well as Tyson. Therefore, the Nevada boxing commission will be in a particularly delicate situation when it comes time to decide whether or not Tyson should get his boxing license back.

"A part of Evander's reason for fighting him again would be to help Mike Tyson redeem himself," said Holyfield's lawyer, Jim Thomas.

Tyson blew his biggest and best chance to reconcile with Holyfield when he failed to attend a benefit in Louisville, Kentucky, honoring Muhammad Ali, where Tyson was supposed to meet Holyfield for the first time since the fight and apologize. Instead, he sent Rogich to go before a hostile crowd and tell them Tyson had problems with his charter plane and couldn't make it.

But even in his most vulnerable moment, Tyson—groveling for sympathy points and saying he doubts if he'll get his license back—had to believe deep down that his punishment wouldn't be permanent. He certainly had the cynics on his side for a change, most of whom were willing to wager their lives that Tyson's economic clout would outweigh Nevada's principled stand.

It's a hard reality that creates a perceived conflict of interest for the commission. A Tyson fight fills arenas and casinos with the kind of free-spending gamblers and celebrities that no other boxer can bring. Such speculation has become a thorn in the sides of boxing commissioners, two of whom, Lorenzo Feritta and Nat Carasali, are in the gambling business. Carasali owns the Peppermill Casino in Reno and Fertilla is part of an investment group that owns four casinos in Las Vegas.

"Nobody in business or politics has ever put any pressure on us," said commission member Dr. James Nave. "The integrity of the state and the sport are the main factors in our decision."

Nonetheless, the commission can't win. It's a classic case of damned if you do, damned if you don't. Maybe Tyson's lawyer, Oscar Goodman, aided in pushing the voting members into a corner. His original comments after the ban was announced didn't sit well, and seemed to make implications that could make future proceedings difficult.

"I know these fellas," said Goodman. "He'll be approved in a year."

These days, however, Goodman is taking a more contrite tone.

"He's been trouble-free and a good citizen," said Goodman recently. "There's no reason to think he won't be justly treated."

If there is a curveball hanging in the balance, it could come from a new commission member, former Dallas Cowboys quarterback Glen Carano, who many think might be the swing vote on a divided panel.

"I have no pre-judgment whatsoever," Carano said. "I'm an ex-athlete myself. I know certain things take place in the heat of battle. But I will study and judge this on its merits."

This time, Goodman must see to it that Tyson appears before the commission and apologize, something he failed to do the last time the panel sat in judgment of him. All things considered, it is unlikely that the boxer's involvement with wrestling will sway the commission one way or another. Of course, that's unless the text of the aforementioned apology is penned by a WWF script writer. ■

Johnnie Whitehead is a sportswriter for the Orlando Sentinel.

BACK ISSUES OF KO

Back issues of several editions of *KO Magazine*, the acknowledged leader in boxing journalism, are still available in limited quantity. Since its inception in 1980, *KO* has become known for its quality stories and columns and peak-action photographs. Plus, each issue contains a full-color centerfold. Don't delay. Supplies are running out!

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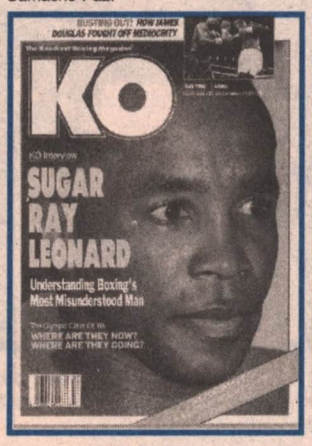

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HEAVYWEIGHT SKI GOLDSTEIN

Something Wasn't Kosher About "The Hebrew Bomber"

By Pete Ehrmann

I would not have been more surprised if it had been the President of the United States calling.

"Hello," said the voice on the long-distance line, "this is 'The Hebrew Bomber.'"

When I was 12 years old, my father introduced me to the 1930s heavyweight boxing champion James Braddock, and, to Dad's everlasting chagrin, instantly converted me from a shy, overweight adolescent who memorized the Latin Mass preparatory to becoming a priest and the first American Pope, into one who memorized the roll of heavyweight champions and dreamed of one day joining their august ranks.

But shy, overweight altar boys don't take well to getting punched in the face, and I was no exception. In 1967, I retired from the ring with a lifetime record of 0-1. I would never be another James Braddock.

Nor another Ski Goldstein, who was one of my earliest heroes because he had done what I dreamed of doing. He had grown up in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, moved to California, and became a successful heavyweight prize fighter.

They called him "The Hebrew Bomber," and THE RING magazine took special note of his professional debut on August 1, 1963, (Ski knocked out Bull Mumford in one round) because it looked like one of the most cherished dreams in boxing had achieved lift-off.

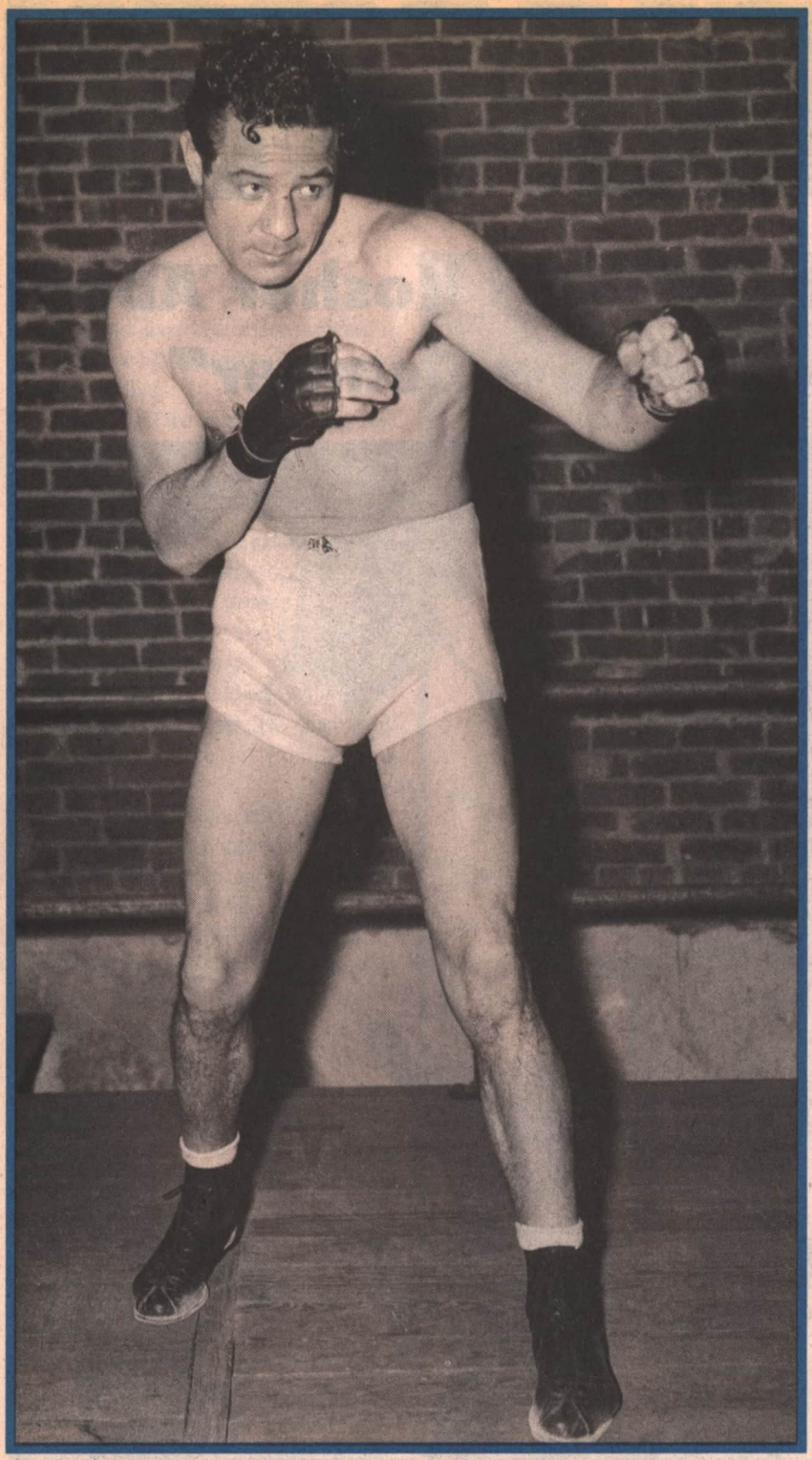
Since the hoary reign of John L. Sullivan inaugurated what is considered the modern age of boxing over a century ago, there has never been a Jewish heavyweight champion. In the 1930s, Max Baer (who lost the title to Braddock) wore the Star of David on his trunks, but trainer Ray Arcel would later debunk the myth of Baer's Jewishness. He knew it wasn't so, said Arcel, when he saw Baer in the shower.

In his book *The Jewish Boxers' Hall Of Fame*, author Ken Blady writes: "Just as they believed in the coming of the Messiah, the Yiddish-speaking aficionados also waited with open arms to greet a Great Jewish Hope." Blady quoted Ned Goldschmidt, writing in *The Jewish Tribune* in 1927: "It is no secret that there are those who feel strongly on the subject that they would swap the greatest inventor or artist of the race in return for a man who will prove himself the greatest fighting machine in the world."

Ring announcer Jimmy Lennon raises Goldstein's arm (opposite page) after "The Hebrew Bomber" beat Mexican heavyweight contender Manuel Ramos at the Olympic Auditorium in 1965. Ramos, seen shaking Goldstein's hands (above), went on to challenge Joe Frazier for the heavyweight championship in '68, but Goldstein never got a crack at the title.

Big Ski Goldstein seemed the living, breathing embodiment of those hopes as he bowled over eight straight opponents in 1963 and '64. Even after Goldstein lost in his debut at Madison Square Garden in New York City, THE RING's Ed Brennan wrote that "despite losing, Goldstein looks like the best young heavyweight around. This San Diego boxer-puncher will be heard from yet."

But it was not to be. In 1969, plagued by injuries and a succession of disappointing fights, the most heralded Jewish heavyweight in recent ring history retired with a 20-6 record.



Jewish fans have long hungered for one of their own to win the heavyweight title. But even Max Baer, who wore the Star of David on his trunks, wasn't really Jewish.

But even if Ski Goldstein had gone on to achieve what his fervent followers most desired, there still would have been no Jewish heavyweight champion. I didn't know this until I decided to locate my old hero and find out how he looked back on his turn in the boxing spotlight.

Directory Assistance gave me the number for a "S. Goldstein" in the San Diego area. It turned out to be a Sheila Goldstein. Then I vaguely recalled an old boxing magazine had reported that Ski had grown up in Milwaukee as Daniel Stepniewski. There was a listing under that name in Escondido, east of San Diego. I called and left a message on the answering machine. If I had reached the ex-boxer known as Ski Goldstein, would he please return my call?

When The Hebrew Bomber called back that evening, I found out that he is 56 years old, sells real estate, and trains amateur boxers. But according to my old records, he was born in 1940, which would make him two years younger.

That was wrong, said the Great Yiddish Hope, who preceded to drop a heavyweight bomb that rocked me like a punch on my glass jaw. "We never lied about the age," he said. "We lied about everything else."

The Hebrew Bomber, it turns out, is as Jewish as kielbasa on Wonder Bread.

"I can say some Jewish stuff," said Stepniewski. "I can say *Hanukkah*."

Growing up in Milwaukee, he had never dreamed of becoming a heavyweight contender, much less a Jewish one. Stepniewski never put on a glove until he joined the U.S. Marines when he turned 18. At boot camp in San Diego, he fought in some smokers and "about got killed a couple of times." But he showed enough raw promise to catch the eye of the sergeant in charge of the base boxing team, who invited him to join.

During his four-year hitch, Stepniewski won 41 of 43 amateur bouts, knocking out 32 opponents and winning the All-Marine title. Discharged in 1962, he decided to give the prize ring a try on the West Coast. It was his manager's idea to turn Dan Stepniewski into Big Ski Goldstein.

"It was an economical decision. They thought it'd sell more tickets," Stepniewski said. "I was skeptical. I look very Polish."

But The Hebrew Bomber's bandwagon took off at a gallop. "I started winning right away, that helped," he said.

After nine fights and nine kayos, *Boxing Illustrated* magazine ran a long profile of "A Heavyweight Named Goldstein" who was "giving rise to long dominant hopes for a Jewish heavyweight champion."

Said the article: "Goldstein's Jewish background is legitimate. When his folks were divorced, he took his Polish mother's name, Stepniewski. But before turning pro, he figured people would have difficulty spelling it. So he used his father's name, Goldstein, retaining the 'ski' in

Stepniewski for his surname."

The Hebrew Bomber's ethnic credentials did not hold up under close scrutiny. "Guys who were sharper, in New York and Santa Monica, they talked to me for five minutes and knew right away I wasn't Jewish," Stepniewski said. He recalls being sat down before one of his bouts by two old Jewish brothers who ran the Santa Monica Auditorium. "Tell us about how you became Jewish," they instructed him.

"I couldn't remember who was supposed to be Jewish, my mother or my father," Stepniewski says. "They knew they had me, but they didn't care. It brought in good crowds."

The name was baloney, but the skills were strictly kosher. Stepniewski got up at 4:30 a.m. for roadwork, then spent eight hours lifting 100-pound cement bags on a construction crew. After that, he'd go to the gym for several hours of hard training. In the ring, he was an exciting fighter who relied on a big punch to get his opponents. "A lot of times, 'til I caught 'em, they gave me a lesson in the manly art of boxing," Stepniewski said.

His 10th fight, and the biggest one of his career, was on November 13, 1964, in Madison Square Garden. Stepniewski's foe, Irish Billy Stephan (or at least he said he was Irish) had three times as many fights as Stepniewski, and knocked him out in the seventh round. Both fighters went down in the third, which was chosen

Goldstein, who became a minor celebrity during the early part of his career, is seen sitting ringside with Paula Kent at the 1965 AAU boxing championships in San Diego. Love those gloves, Paula.

The 56-year-old Goldstein (seated, far right) is still involved in boxing, training amateurs at the Escondido Boxing & Fitness Center. These days, however, he's using his real name, Dan Stepniewski.

Round of the Year by *Boxing International* magazine.

The pain of that first loss was eased by what Stepniewski found when he emerged from his dressing room. Waiting for him were 500 fans who wanted his autograph. "I couldn't believe it," he said, "and I'll never forget it."

His next bout was unforgettable, too, but not the same way. On the day he fought Mexican heavyweight champion and future world title challenger Manuel Ramos at the Olympic Auditorium in Los Angeles, it rained so hard that Stepniewski could hardly see to drive to the fight. His contract called for him to be paid a percentage of the live gate receipts, but few fans braved the weather. Stepniewski beat Ramos, but hardly anyone was there. "I made $180," he said.

(Continued on page 65)

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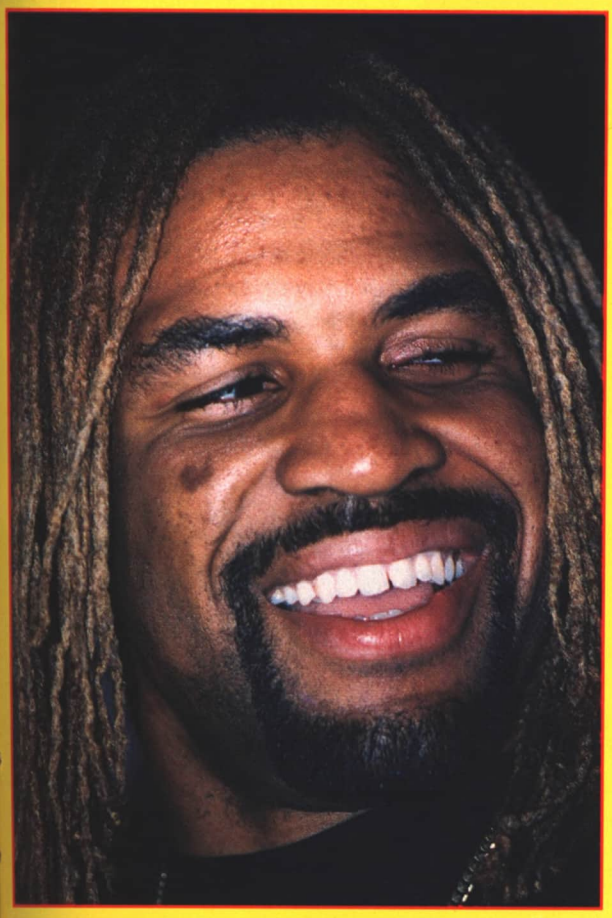
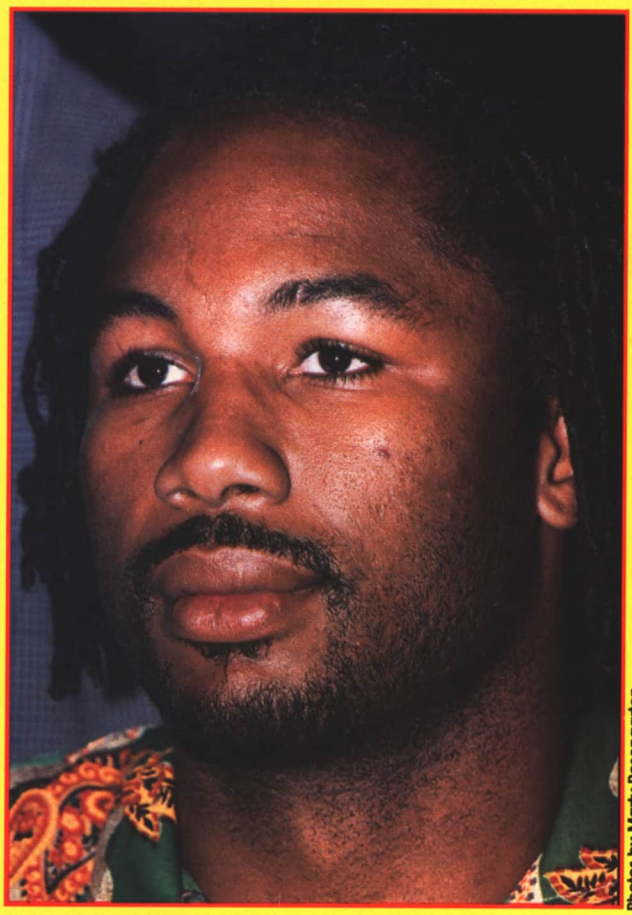




Photos by Marty Rosengarten

SHANNON BRIGGS

Don't Dread "The Battle Of The Dreadlocks"!

By D.E. Thomas

As consolation prizes go, Lennox Lewis-Shannon Briggs could be worse.

The jackpot, of course, would have been a long-awaited showdown between the top two men in boxing's glamour division, an occurrence that emerges about as often as a total eclipse of a blue moon. At the present, Lewis and Evander Holyfield have no equals. They look across a barren landscape and see only each other standing above the heavyweight horizon. With Mike Tyson sidelined until at least the summer and Riddick Bowe still in retirement, it is the most natural mega-fight of the day. When Lewis disposed of Andrew Golota and Holyfield healed an old wound with his stoppage of Michael Moorer, the powers that be began to make a show of trying to give the pugilistic public what it wants.

But all of Don King's horses and Home Box Office's men could not bridge the bargaining table to make the ultimate fight. So we are left with a consolation prize. Instead of Holyfield-Lewis in Las Vegas, it's Lewis-Briggs in Atlantic City on March 28. Might as well make the best of it.

Lewis' finest hour was actually only 95 seconds long. He disposed of Andrew Golota last October in Atlantic City, creating interest in a unification bout with Evander Holyfield. Instead, Lewis will seek to unify the WBC belt and the linear title against Briggs.

It may take some effort to think of a reason to get excited about WBC heavyweight champion Lewis' latest title fight, but the Briggs bout actually does have a few things going for it. Compared to his defenses against Henry Akinwande, Phil Jackson, and Oliver McCall, it's practically an event. As marking time goes, this voluntary defense is more purposeful than most mandatory challenges go, and it seems the best available option for the champion.

First, you have the historic significance of the fight. Briggs laid claim to boxing's highest prize by virtue of his dubious victory over George Foreman, the man who beat the man who beat the man. Foreman sat on the linear heavyweight championship with a questionable win of his own over Axel Schulz, then cheapened the lineage by beating hapless Crawford Grimsley. Foreman revived his career by pounding out a close decision over Lou Savarese, regaining a measure of the respect that comes with the office. Whatever you think of Briggs, or the judges who handed him a majority decision over Big George, his claim is—on paper, at least—more legitimate than that of Holyfield or Lewis.

The choices most often mentioned for Lewis, 32-1 (26), after his vaporization of Golota were retreads like Buster Douglas and England's Herbie Hide, who have done next to nothing to create any interest in their exploits, and mandatory contender Zeljko Mavrovic of Croatia, who has about as much business in a heavyweight title fight as RuPaul. Foreman was considered a cinch to get past Briggs in most circles, but he didn't figure to venture anywhere near Lewis or bring enough to the table to succeed in his efforts to get a rematch with Holyfield.

Briggs, 30-1 (24), got his foot in the door by knocking off Foreman, and took advantage of the situation when negotiations between the Lewis and Holyfield camps went about as well as earlier efforts to make Lewis-Bowe or Lewis-Tyson. If Lewis wins, he further strengthens his position and gets a toehold on the top rung of the ladder occupied by "The Real Deal." If Briggs pulls another upset, he will prove himself worthy of the linear title while putting himself in line for a chance to settle the whole argument with a fight against Holyfield.

Though many felt Briggs was awarded a decision he didn't deserve against Foreman, he did show observers that he belongs somewhere among the upper echelon of the heavyweight division. Briggs displayed a solid chin, impressive strength, a good jab, and plenty of heart against Big George.

Imagine if Briggs instead went out and lost the linear championship in a rematch with Darroll Wilson. John L. Sullivan would roll over in his grave. If the unification mega-fight isn't going to happen, better to get the chain of succession of the heavyweight crown in order.

Whatever one may think of this match,

it is at the very least a showdown between two men at the peak of their respective games. Many pegged Polish enigma Golota as a serious threat to Lewis, but the champ has never looked more electric or devastating than in that first-round knockout. Briggs was all but written off after his loss to Wilson, but he proved against Foreman that he has the tools to cope at the higher levels of the game when inspired. Even those who favored Foreman in the scoring have to admit that Briggs exceeded all expectations. Two confident warriors coming off career-best performances usually makes for an interesting evening.

That's not to even mention the hair factor. "The Battle Of The Dreadlocks" will certainly rate watching just to see those tightly bound curls fly along with the standard sweat. Hanson never had it this good in the follicle department. If there's a weave at work, more than the boxer's barber will know for sure when the hooks and uppercuts start thudding home. The challenger has the Goldilocks look that comes straight from an MTV video, his gilded 'do riding high atop his head in a tight bundle, with the ends bobbing to and fro every time he slips or catches a punch. Lewis has always opted for a more traditional look, his braids flowing evenly down the sides of his head to shoulder length. His coiffure is conservative by Briggs' standards, speaking of his relative maturity. Both fighters also like to sport a goatee to add to the effect, with Briggs preferring a slightly thicker version than Lewis' well-manicured facial hair.

If it doesn't cut it with the HBO audience, this fight may have a place in the hearts of the *GQ* set. This could be just the spark the sport has been waiting for, a refreshing step into the fashion spotlight. Sure, Naseem Hamed can strut with the best of them, but no, Prince, your hair doesn't look that good—at least not when compared to these two image-conscious big men. Generation X viewers will appreciate the extra color and splash. It's better than that streaking hockey puck the Fox

(Continued on page 54)

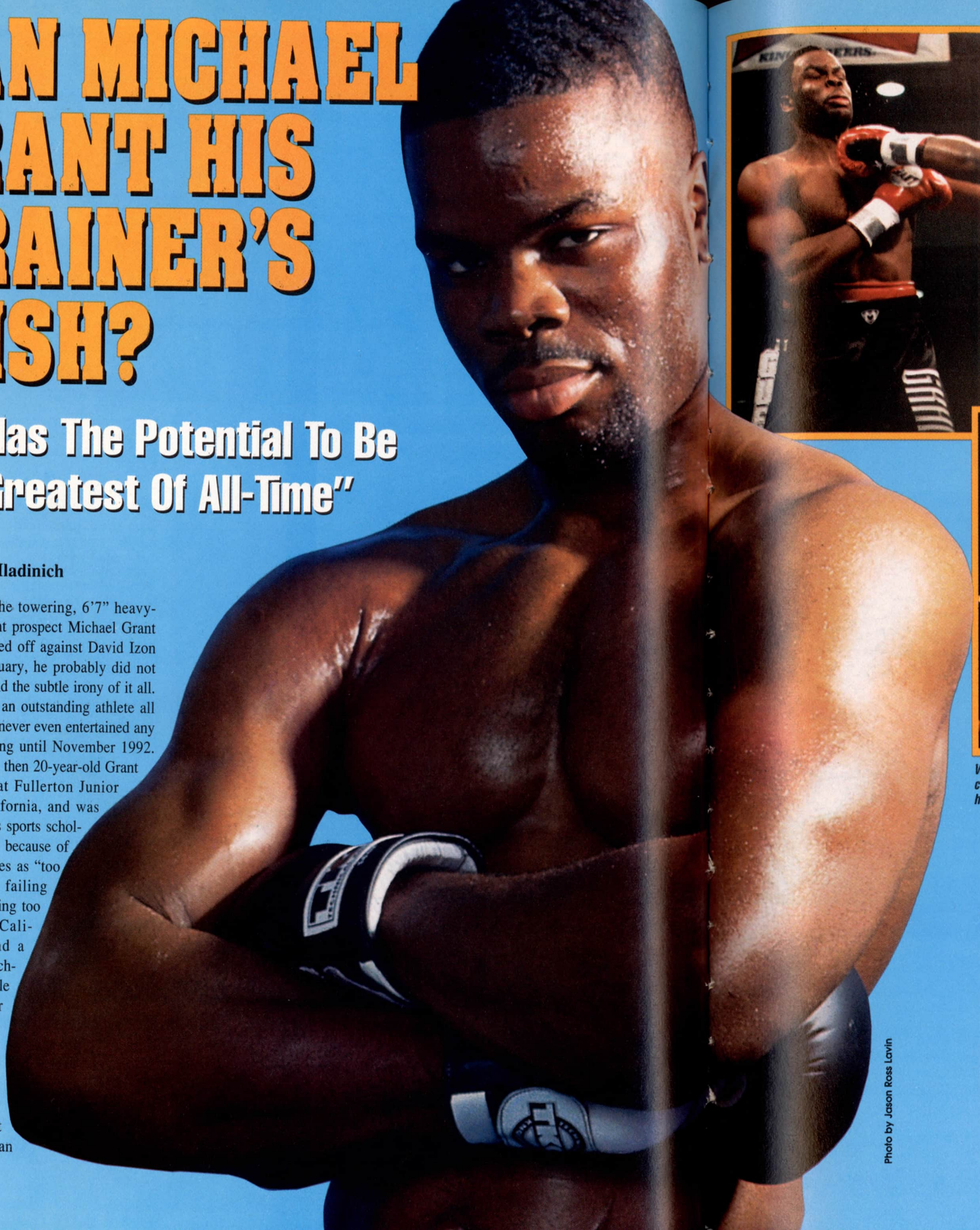
Like Briggs, Lewis is surprisingly cultured for a fighter. In this photo from the days before Lewis began sporting dreadlocks, he is seen enjoying a spot of tea with promoter Frank Maloney .

Lewis and Briggs are both susceptible if they take a clean shot on the chin. Lewis' lone loss came against Oliver McCall in 1994, when he surrendered the WBC title as a second-round kayo victim. Briggs was upset in March of '96 when Darroll Wilson knocked him out in the third.

CAN MICHAEL GRANT HIS TRAINER'S WISH?

"He Has The Potential To Be The Greatest Of All-Time"

By Robert Mladinich



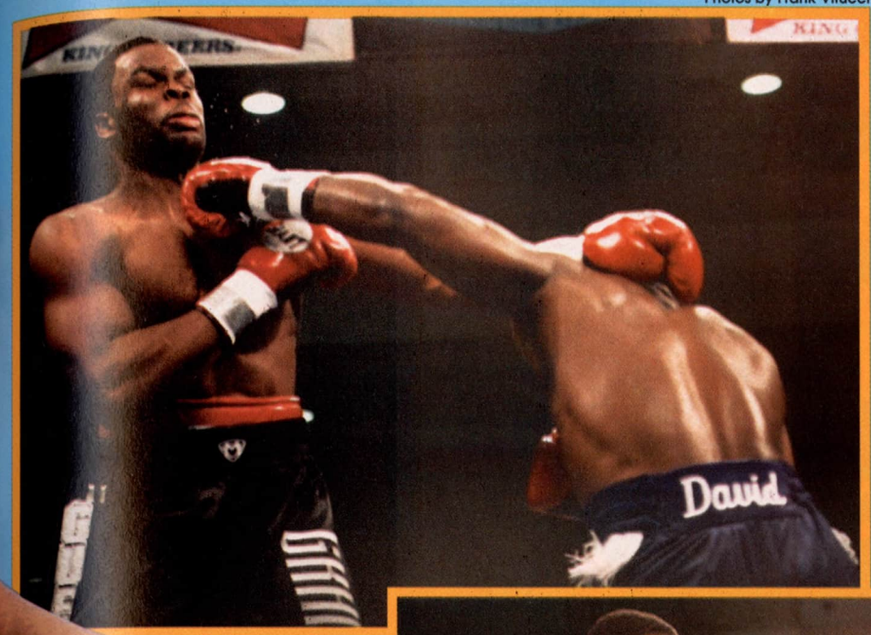
When the towering, 6'7" heavyweight prospect Michael Grant squared off against David Izon on HBO in January, he probably did not quite comprehend the subtle irony of it all. Grant had been an outstanding athlete all his life, but had never even entertained any thought of boxing until November 1992. At that time, the then 20-year-old Grant was a student at Fullerton Junior College in California, and was about to lose his sports scholarship eligibility because of what he describes as "too much partying, failing myself, and having too much fun in California." He and a friend were watching the first battle of the Evander Holyfield-Riddick Bowe trilogy on pay-per-view, and in an oddly analytical moment, Grant proclaimed, "I can do that." What surprised his friend was the fact that he said it with such certainty, even though he had never laced on a glove in his life and did not even have much propensity for streetfighting, even though he had grown up on Chicago's tough South Side.

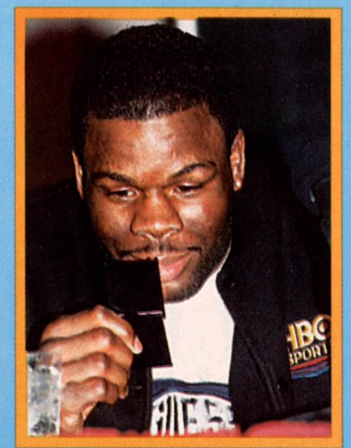
Izon, on the other hand, had won a silver medal for his native Nigeria the previous summer at the Barcelona Olympic Games, and was wrapping up an illustrious amateur career. En route to winning that medal, he had beaten the heavily favored David Tua of New Zealand and Kirk Johnson of Canada, who were considered shoo-ins to beat the unknown and unheralded Izon. When Grant finally put on boxing gloves for the first time six months later, Izon had already embarked on a professional career on the strength of his Olympic showing.

By the time their circuitous journeys brought them together on January 17 at the Atlantic City Convention Center, in a bout hosted by Bally's Park Place, Izon's record of 20-2 (18) reflected less professional fights than Grant, although he certainly had more experience at the world-class level. Grant's record of 26-0 (18) did

(Continued on page 55)

Photos by Frank Vitucci





Grant proved he could take a shot (left) by absorbing the best punches of the normally destructive Izon. After the fight, Grant used a compact mirror (above) to comically inspect the damage.

While Grant's size and power were the biggest difference against Izon, his unusually high protective cup was also a factor. Izon never got to execute his plan of working the body, and Grant overwhelmed him with 45 straight punches to force a stoppage in the fifth.

Photo by Jason Ross Lavin

Touched By An Angel

GATTI RUNS OUT OF MIRACLES AGAINST MANFREDY

Photos by Frank Vitucci

By Bernard Fernandez

As is the case with certain indigenous peoples of New Guinea, selected fighters are known to be headhunters.

Particularly when the head being hunted belongs to one Arturo Gatti.

Angel "El Diablo" Manfredy, having studied the nearly successful anthropological expeditions undertaken by Tracy Patterson, Wilson Rodriguez, Calvin Grove, and Gabriel Ruelas, concluded that the best way to bag Gatti was to not focus all his efforts on the most obvious target, Gatti's head, as had the aforementioned hunters.

"Everybody gets to Gatti because he's so easy to hit," Manfredy, who, like Gatti, holds a version of the junior lightweight championship, said before their HBO-televised, over-the-limit non-title bout in Atlantic City Convention Hall. "But too many guys just go for Gatti's head because they know he busts up quick.

"If he's open to the body, I'm going to crack his ribs. If he's open to the head, sure, I'll swell him up same as everybody else. You have to destroy Gatti up and down 'til there's nothing left, because he'll keep coming at you until you finish him off. I intend to finish him off."

It sounded like a good plan, and Manfredy, a 3-1 underdog, might have attempted to implement it had he been afforded the time to work at a less frenetic pace. But opportunities are where you find them and, hey, Gatti almost immediately presented his tattooed opponent with an even more inviting facial bull's-eye than had been aimed at by all those near-miss guys.

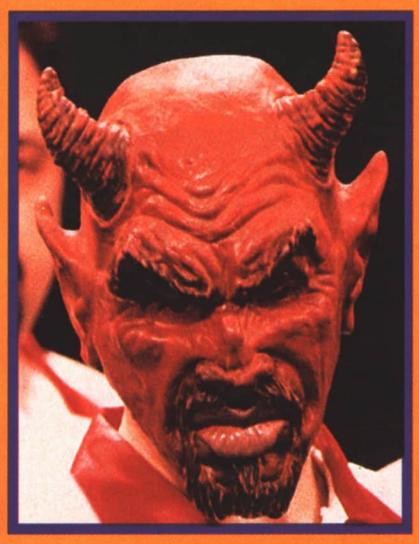
An overhand right midway through the first round of their scheduled 12-rounder opened a deep cut over Gatti's left eye, obliging a bleeding Captain Comeback to fight with an even more urgent sense of purpose than is usually the case. The occasionally handsome Gatti generally goes, oh, three or four rounds before his face begins to bust open like an overripe tomato. Against Manfredy, Gatti didn't even have that narrow grace period.

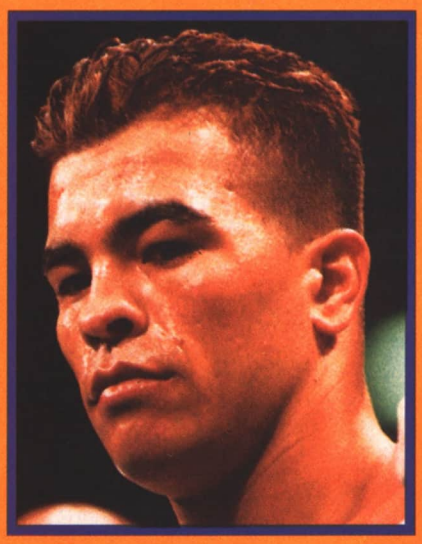
"At the end of the first round, I felt the blood dripping and I knew I was in trouble," Gatti said after Manfredy was awarded an eighth-round technical knockout victory owing to the severity of Gatti's wound.

"The cut extended two centimeters in the last two rounds," ring physician Dominic Coletta said after a consultation with concurring referee Wayne Hedgepeth. "Up until then, it was stable. It wouldn't have been fair to let him continue. He basically was fighting with one eye."

Manfredy, seeing Gatti vainly attempt

As expected, both men landed early and often, but it was Gatti who suffered the most damage, especially to his left eye. For the ebullient Manfredy (below), it was the sort of win that will boost his marquee value and earning potential.





Contrasting images: While Gatti actually looked pretty good before the fights started, Manfredy was a fright in his "El Diablo" mask. After the blood began flowing, their roles were reversed.

to blink away the blood that streamed into his eye during every round, knew what to do. He continued to pinpoint the cut with stinging rights, even though he fought from the fifth round on with a broken right hand. There simply was too much at stake for him to discontinue its use.

"I didn't care that my hand was broken," Manfredy said. "I kept throwing it anyway. I kept rocking him with that right hand. When I caught Arturo in the first round, I knew it was a bad cut. I also knew they wouldn't stop the fight because we're in his hometown. I had to keep going."

Other than a poor sense of geography—the Montreal-born Gatti is based in Jersey City, New Jersey, which is not exactly a suburb of Sodom by the Shore—Manfredy was in the zone throughout. He remained calm in the face of Gatti's increasingly desperate attack, even flooring him with a perfectly timed counter left hook in the third round. And why shouldn't he have kept his cool? It wasn't Manfredy who had sprung the leak.

"I caught him with a nice shot, a left hook right on the chin," Manfredy noted. "It was a good punch, but he got up. That didn't surprise me at all. He's been known to get up after being knocked down.

"A couple of pictures popped into my head. I remembered when he fought Wilson Rodriguez, when he fought Gabriel Ruelas, and how he had rallied back to win. I thought to myself, *Stay calm and don't try to jump on him real quick. Take your time, pick your shots, just like you've been doing.* And that's exactly what happened.

It was a right to the head that busted open Gatti's left eye late in the first round. As the fight progressed, Manfredy succeeded in making the wound worse with additional right hands to the injured area.

Gatti fought back with vicious hooks to the body, especially in the fourth round, but was never able to swing the fight his way. Manfredy also scored well to the midsection.

"You can't just sit there and go bang, bang, bang. You've got to show some boxing ability. You've got to be in and out, in and out, and stand your ground when you need to. Get your respect. I got my respect."

Gatti knows a thing or two about according—and receiving—respect. He often is in dire straits during his bouts, but he has a way of extricating himself at the last moment, which is why he is regarded

(Continued on page 62)

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IRISH DAN DONNELLY

Still On Tour 178 Years After His Death

By Patrick Myler

Fighting Irishman Dan Donnelly always packed a punch. He still does, 178 years after his death.

When brave men fought on turf with bare knuckles, and bloody battles had no time limit, Donnelly's mighty right arm smashed down the pick of British pugilism. Now the same lethal limb, severed after Donnelly's corpse was dug up by graverobbers and remarkably well-preserved, is set to bowl over the Americans. Des Byrne, owner of the world's most remarkable pugilistic memento, plans to take it on a U.S. lecture tour.

"I'm hoping to get sufficient backing to make such a trip worthwhile," said Byrne. "There has always been great interest in Donnelly's arm and endless demands for more information on its original owner."

For more than 40 years, the grisly relic was displayed at the Byrne family's tavern, The Hideout, in Kilcullen, County Kildare. Visitors would marvel at the sight of the blackened arm, coated with preservative after it was severed from the fighter's body. Time after time, Byrne's late father, Jim, and Des himself, would be called upon to tell the story of the fighting hero and how his powerful right arm wound up in a glass case in an Irish bar.

Donnelly, born in Dublin in 1788, was idolized by his countrymen after his great victory over England's George Cooper on

Until recently, Donnelly's arm was on display at The Hideout tavern in Kilcullen, County Kildare, Ireland, owned by Jim Byrne. Behind Byrne is a poster showing one of the many ballads written about Donnelly and an illustration that greatly exaggerates the length of his arms.

Donnelly, a native of Dublin, was perhaps the most popular Irish fighter of the early-19th century. He was also a gambler, drunkard, and womanizer.

the Curragh of Kildare, on December 13, 1815. Up to 20,000 spectators had arrived by whatever horse-drawn transport was available—many gladly walked the 30 miles from Dublin—to see the brawny carpenter smash Cooper's jaw with two terrific blows after 22 minutes of fighting.

As he strode up the hill of what is still known as Donnelly's Hollow after the fight, his fanatical followers dug out the impressions of his feet. They are still there today, leading from the monument commemorating the famous battle.

Bonfires were lit all over neighboring counties in celebration of Donnelly's victory, and taverns ran dry trying to meet the demand. The hero of the hour happily joined in the festivities. By the time he arrived home in Dublin, eight days after the fight, Donnelly had hardly a penny left of his $60 purse.

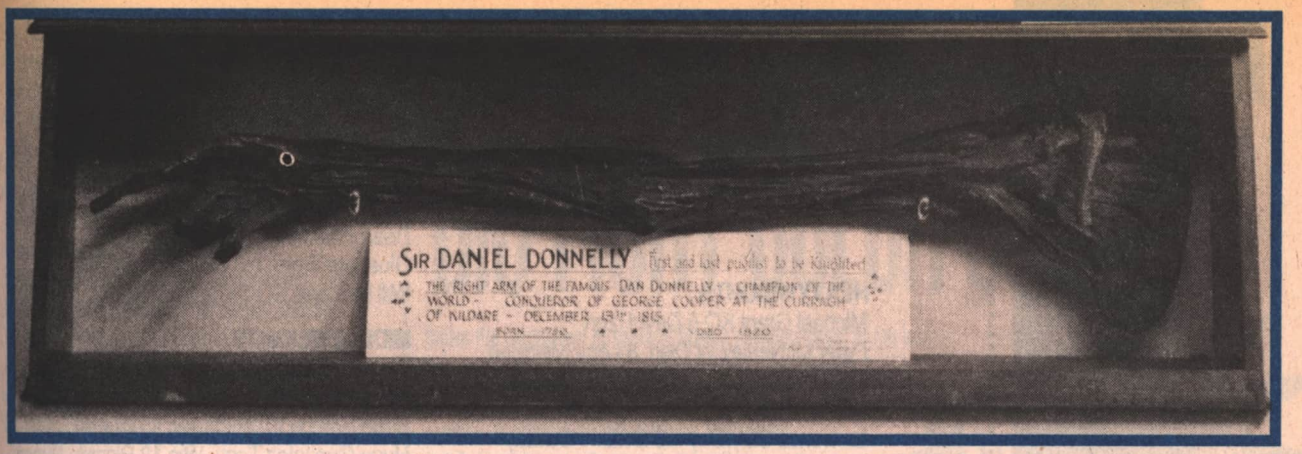
Among the many legends that grew from the occasion was the account of a character known as "The Sugar Cane Man." Just like the medicine men who sold their "magic elixir" off the backs of wagons in the Wild West, the Dublin street trader claimed wondrous qualities for his product.

Donnelly was having the worst of the fight against Cooper, so the story goes, when "Miss Kelly," sister of Donnelly's patron, Capt. William Kelly, slipped him a chunk of the candy.

"Now, me charmer, give him a warmer," she said. The rejuvenated Donnelly promptly delivered the knockout blow. If modern drug testing were available back then, Cooper might have been able to get the fight verdict declared void!

Mythology took over again when Donnelly traveled to England and was greeted by the Prince Regent. "Prinny," a renowned fight fan, supposedly laid the sword upon the Irishman's shoulders and declared him "Sir Daniel." If true, it would be the only time a member of the British royal family bestowed a knighthood on a fighter—and an Irishman at that! There is,

There is a monument in Curragh of Kildare commemorating Donnelly's epic victory over Englishman George Cooper in 1815. After the battle, fans dug up the impressions of footsteps their hero left behind as he strode away from what is called Donnelly's Hollow. They can still be seen today.



Prior to finding its way back home to Ireland, Donnelly's arm was exhibited at an English circus. But despite the legend that the fighter was knighted, there is no documentation to bolster the claim.

however, no documentary evidence that Donnelly was entitled to call himself "Sir Dan."

Another tall tale is that he had the longest arms in the history of the ring. Standing upright, it was said, he could button his knee-breeches without stooping. Actually, it is no longer than the limb of an average six-footer, which Donnelly was.

Hype about his invincibility was probably wishful thinking on the part of his blinkered fans. Though he never lost in the ring, Donnelly only had three major fights, and would have been a big underdog in a match with Tom Cribb, then the champion of England. Efforts to pair them came to naught.

Donnelly's only ring appearance on English soil was at Crawley Downs, in Sussex, on July 21, 1819. A sluggish Donnelly overcame some rough moments to defeat Tom Oliver in 34 rounds. He finished the bout with a hard right to the head and a tremendous cross-buttock. This tactic, executed by maneuvering an opponent on to the hip, then throwing him to the ground with force, was perfectly legitimate under the loose laws drawn up by English bare-knuckles champion Jack Broughton.

A hard drinker, gambler, and womanizer, Donnelly had nothing to show for his brief ring career. Even the four Dublin bars he ran at various stages failed to make a profit. He was either too generous with free drinks for his pals or helped himself too often.

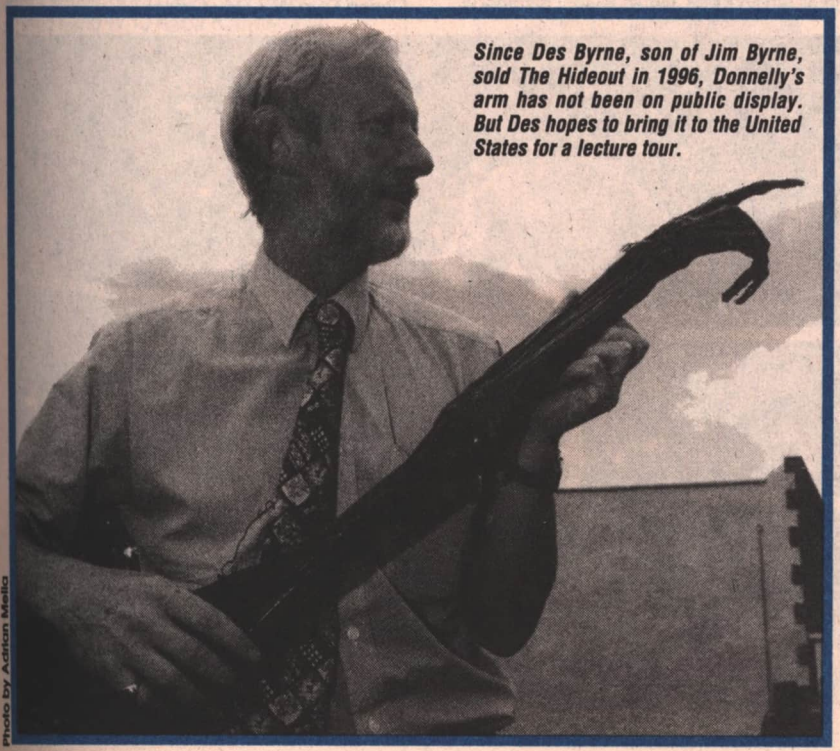
On February 18, 1820, Donnelly died of a fever, which followed a strenuous ballgame. He was only 32. Today, a wall plaque marks the site of his home above his last tavern, where he took the fatal count. But it is Donnelly's arm that continues to arouse the most interest.

When it was disclosed all those years ago that the body of the fighting Irishman had been stolen from his grave, there was a huge public outcry. The Dublin surgeon who had bought it from the bodysnatchers had it reburied, but only after secretly removing the arm. With its muscles and bones exposed, the limb proved a valuable asset for teachers of anatomy at Edinburgh University, Scotland. It then was passed to a circus owner who exhibited it on several tours of Britain.

In 1904, it was returned to Ireland and was on display at a Belfast bar for 50 years, until it came to rest at The Hideout. Unfortunately, it no longer holds pride of place there. When Des Byrne sold the bar in 1996 to run and develop a nearby gas station, he took his prized souvenir with him. He is now looking for a permanent home for the arm, where it can once again be available for public viewing. In the meantime, he wants to give Americans a first-hand look at the remarkable ring relic.

"If I can find a way to arrange a U.S. trip, I would be happy to show it to a wider audience," he said. "Donnelly's arm might be a gruesome sight, but it always is the center of attraction in the bar." ■

***Patrick Myler is an Irish sports writer and the author of* A Century Of Boxing Greats.**



Since Des Byrne, son of Jim Byrne, sold The Hideout in 1996, Donnelly's arm has not been on public display. But Des hopes to bring it to the United States for a lecture tour.

Photo by Adrian Mello

SUMMARY

HEAVYWEIGHTS
Michael Grant KO 5 David Izon
Peter McNeeley W Disq. 8 Larry Menefee
Lamon Brewster KO 6 Biko Botowamungu
Lamon Brewster KO 1 Tony LaRosa
Lawrence Clay-Bey KO 2 Mario Cawley
Lance Whitaker KO 1 Joe Ballard
Monte Barrett KO 4 Guy Sonnenberg
Shazzon Bradley KO 1 Derrick Edwards
Wolfgramm KO 1 Kevin Rosier
Oleg Maskaev KO 4 Booker Word
Quinn Navarre KO 3 Ed White
Corrie Sanders KO 6 Melvin Foster
Joe Bugner W 12 Colin Wilson
Billy Tompkins KO 2 Stanley Wright
James Frierson KO 2 Robert Toyer
Shane Woollas KO 8 Gary Williams
Butterbean W 4 Harry Funmaker

CRUISERWEIGHTS
Kenny Keene W 12 Richard Lamontagne
Vassiliy Jirov KO 2 Jason Nicholson
David Izegwire KO 8 Tim Knight
Adam Watt KO 1 Kevin Wagstaff
Stefan Anghern KO 9 Torsten May
Mario Tonus KO 2 Frank Wuestenberghs

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
Montell Griffin KO 8 Jesus Javier Castaneda
Antonio Tarver KO 7 Boyor Chew
Richard Hall KO 3 Karl Willis
Steve Ottke W 10 Ali Saidi

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Joe Calzaghe KO 3 Branco Sobot
Bo James W 10 John Mugabi
John Mugabi Tech. Draw 2 Paul Smallman
Dean Francis KO 9 Frederic Seillier
Giuseppe Ferrazzo KO 8 Patrick Titeux
Will McIntyre KO 3 Robert Doyle

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Laurent Boudouani W 8 Kevin Pompey
(Non-title Bout)
Silvio Branco W 12 Darren Maciunski
Hugo Gonzalez Tech. Win 10 Ricardo Nunez
Abel Parker W 10 Brian Williams

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
Verno Phillips KO 9 Julian Jackson
Kenny Ellis KO 6 Anthony Perry
Todd Foster KO 1 Robert Perez
Ensley Bingham KO 12 Nicky Thurbin
Cleveland Corder KO 3 Rondell Armstrong
Roman Karmazin KO 12 Jesus Gutierrez
Akira Ohigashi KO 4 Takanori Takanami
Ahmet Dottuev KO 6 Michel Simeon

WELTERWEIGHTS
Pasquale Perna KO 7 Francesco Pernice
John Molnar KO 3 John Nunez
Danny Perez KO 9 Olegario DeLeon
Julian Holland KO 5 Stefan Scriggins
Suwito Lagola D 12 Danny Pierce

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
Diobelys Hurtado KO 1 Aaron Zarate
Zab Judah KO 1 Steve Valdez
Darien Ford W 6 Billy Gates

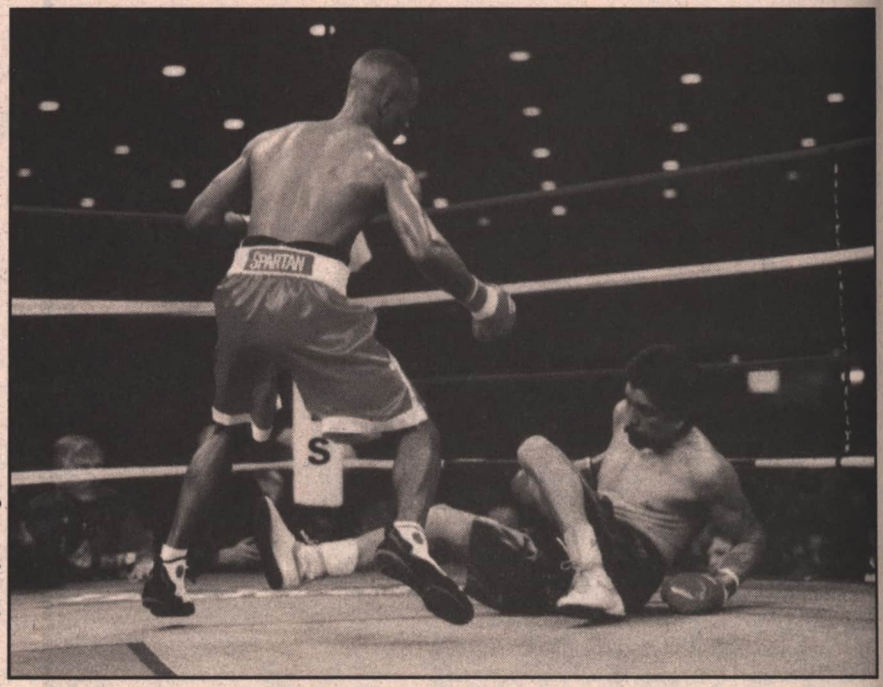


Photo by Marty Rosengarten

Judah jumped on Valdez for a first-round kayo

Effi Schneider W 10 Mark Fernandez
Alberto Cortes KO 6 Walter Crucce
Carlos Vilches KO 7 Miguel Arevalo
Ajib Albarado KO 4 Umnard Sukhotai

LIGHTWEIGHTS
Angel Manfredy KO 8 Arturo Gatti
John-John Molina KO 8 Alex Perez
Israel Cardona KO 3 Sam Girard
Jesse James Leija W 12 Joel Perez
Jean-Baptiste Mendy W 8 Steve Valdez
James Crayton KO 4 Daniel Lujan
James Crayton W 8 Jose Manjarrez
Vivien Harris KO 1 Ahmed Lamb
Thomas Seiler KO 4 Joe Zeikle

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
Floyd Mayweather KO 5 Hector Arroyo
Julien Lorcy KO 2 Paris Alexander
Felix St. Kitt KO 2 Terry Smith
Kanat Sikhumbaev W 12 Farhad Arslanov

FEATHERWEIGHTS
David Vazquez Tech. Win 9 Enrique Valenzuela
Maximilliano Gomez W 10 Juan Manuel Arellano
Kazu Arisawa KO 4 Kapchul Choi

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
Yutaka Manabe KO 10 Kyoshiro Fukushima
Yonghoon Lee W 10 Agustin Lorenzo
Donovan Carey Tech. Draw 4 Eddie Rangel
Fusaaki Takenaga KO 4 Jinho Lee

BANTAMWEIGHTS
Veerapol Sahaprom KO 5 Joel Avila
Lukhin C.P. Gym KO 4 Joren Jordan
Shin Yamato Tech. Dec. 7 Jiro Matsushima
Chulho Kang W 10 Napa Kiatwanchai
Fabrakob Rakkiat Gym KO 6 Vuyani Moss

JUNIOR BANTAMWEIGHTS
Roberto Salas Alvarez D 10 Julio U. Luna
Ratanachai Dutchboy Gym KO 3 Judy Caebon
Takato Toguchi KO 5 Roy Clave
Reisuke Hattori W 10 Hideji Nagano

FLYWEIGHTS
Kori Tanaka W 10 Fumihiko Sasaki
Javier Munoz W 6 Albert Guardado

JUNIOR FLYWEIGHTS
Saman Sorjaturong KO 6 Ernesto Rubillar *(Non-title Bout)*
Juan Cordoba W 12 Melchor Cob Castro

STRAWWEIGHTS
Songkram Porpaoin Tech. Dec. 5 Randy Mangubat
Satoru Abe KO 3 Rudy Guilos
Carmelo Caceres W 12 Rodel Lamela

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RINGSIDE REPORTS

FIGHTER *of the* MONTH

When Manfredy watched Arturo Gatti rise from the canvas in the third round after crumpling him with a paralyzing left hook to the jaw, Gatti's career flashed before "El Diablo's" eyes. Manfredy saw a nearly blind Gatti knocking out Wilson Rodriguez after being floored early in the fight. He saw Gatti collapse Gabriel Ruelas at the very moment when Ruelas was moving in for the kill. Not willing to allow himself to end up on Gatti's highlight reel, Manfredy took a deep breath and patiently continued doing what he had been doing so well to that point: outboxing Gatti, never leaving himself open to the IBF junior lightweight champion's dreaded left hook.

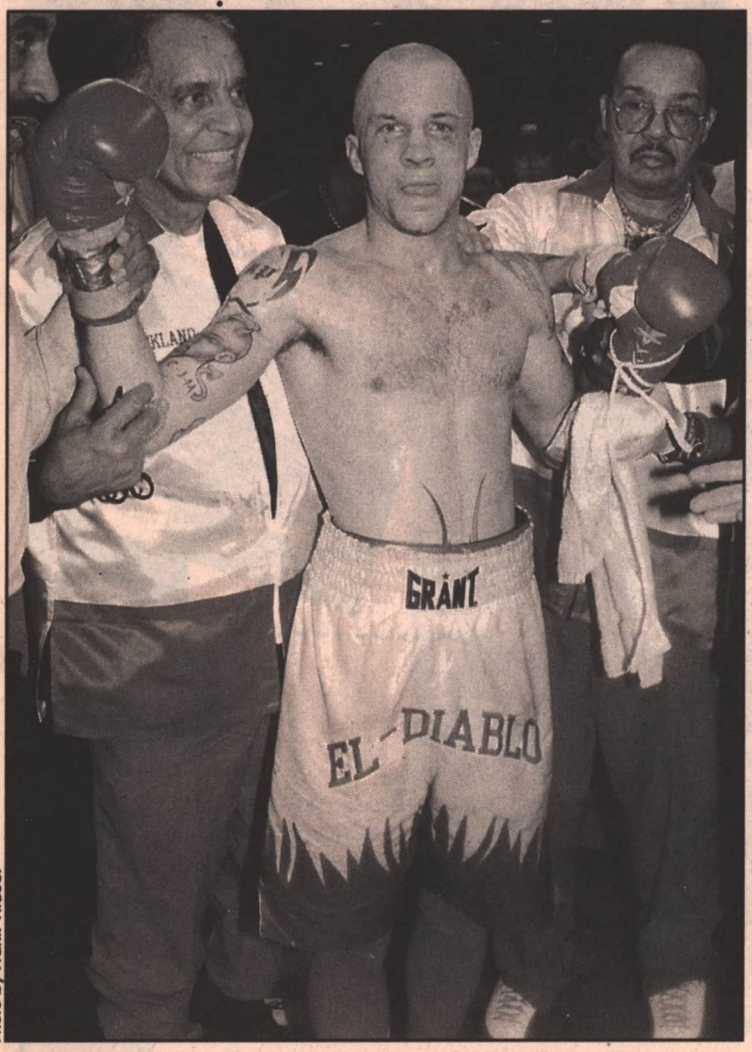


Photo by Frank Vitucci

While Gatti claimed after the fight that the severe cut over his left eye—the cause of the eighth-round stoppage—was the difference between him and Manfredy on this night, the real difference was Manfredy's refusal to feel pain. None of Gatti's bombs affected El Diablo as he persistently pummeled Gatti to the body, frequently mixing in right hands to the head as well to widen the gash. Manfredy solved the Gatti puzzle that has perplexed so many others. In a fight billed as "To Hell And Back," Manfredy took Gatti to that fiery place he has been to so many times before, and kept him there until the fight was over.

• • • •

Angel Manfredy

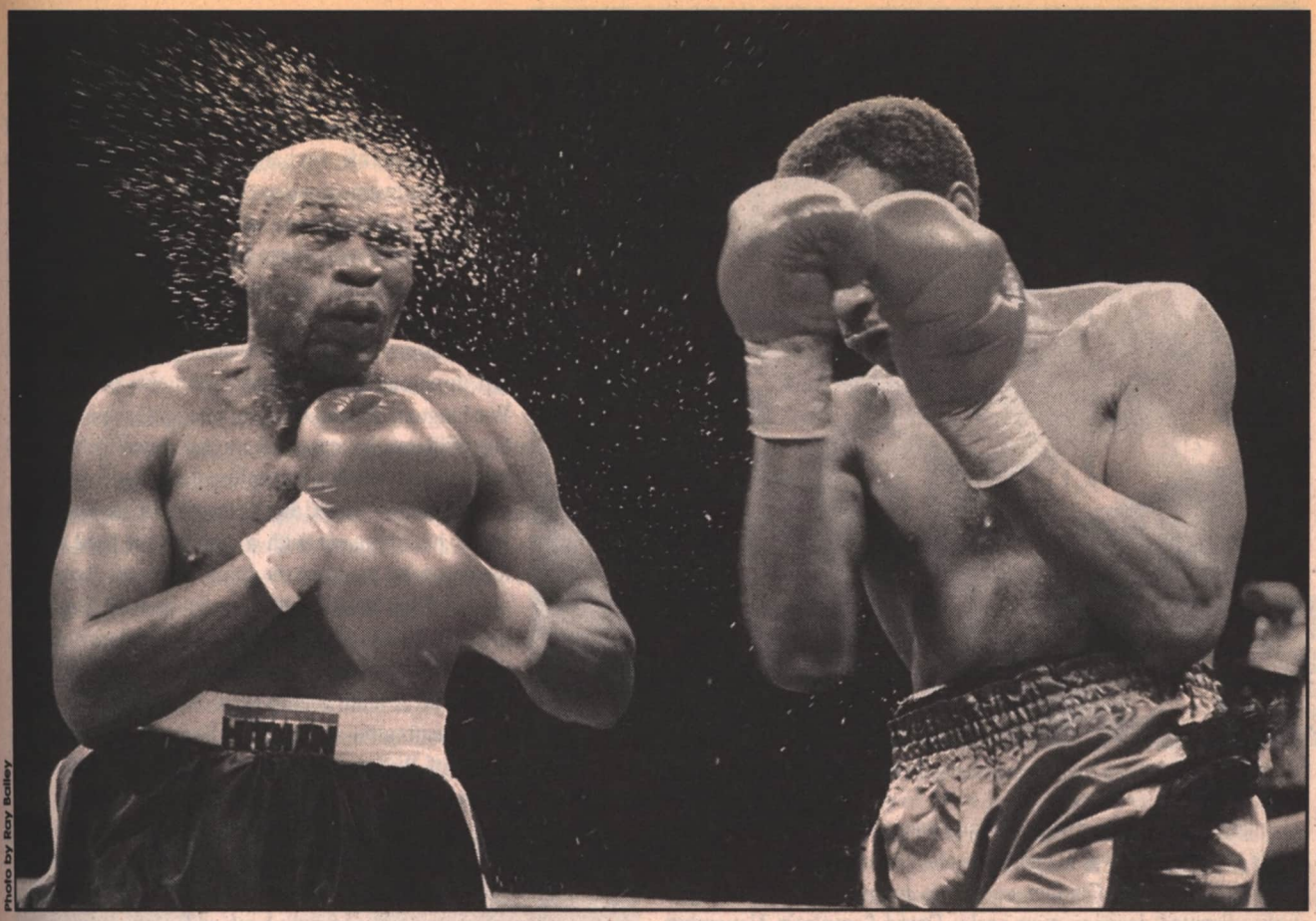


Photo by Ray Bailey

The crafty James halted Mugabi's comeback

Bo James W 10 John Mugabi

Ledyard, Connecticut: It was a classic case of stalker vs. runner, with the latter winning a unanimous decision because the former just doesn't stalk as well as he used to. Mugabi, 165½, Brisbane, Australia, the former "Beast" who won the WBC super welterweight championship in 1989 and never went the distance in any of his 42 fights before retiring in 1991, picked the wrong opponent against whom to display his aging skills. James, 164, Plainfield, New Jersey, relied on his jab and legs to make Mugabi look bad, even if Mugabi arguably did enough to win the decision.

The 37-year-old Mugabi's age was evident throughout the fight as James, not all that sprightly himself at 36, was able to elude The Beast's ponderous punches that were once so devastating. James controlled the first round with his lump-raising jab, but Mugabi went on the offense in the second, scoring with overhand rights—and missing with just about everything else. Mugabi kept the pressure on in the third, scoring again with the overhand right and doing damage with a slew of bodyshots. Late in the round, though, James landed his first significant powerpunch, a strong right hand to the point of Mugabi's chin.

Mugabi backed off and allowed James to dictate the pace in the fourth round, and after landing a strong left hook midway through the fifth, engaged in the bout's most telling moment. The Beast pinned James along the ropes, a position that would have spelled disaster for a Mugabi opponent 10 years ago. Instead, James casually covered up and swayed from side to side while Mugabi flailed at him wildly, missing with nearly everything.

After Mugabi struck with a right uppercut early in the sixth, James went back to his defensive jab, prompting a difficult-to-score game of cat and mouse throughout the next couple of rounds. Mugabi enjoyed his best round in the ninth, when he broke through to score with several lefts to the chin. James came back in the 10th, however, finally punching in combination. When all was said and done, neither man had done any substantial damage, leaving the Foxwoods Casino crowd booing the once-exciting Beast and his rarely exciting opponent.

The three American judges clearly preferred the strategy of James, 22-8-1 (11), as Glenn Feldman and George Smith saw it 97-93 in his favor, while Steve Epstein had it wider at 98-92. THE RING sided with Mugabi, 97-95. Perhaps the verdict will convince The Beast, 41-5 (39), to call it quits for good.

The referee was Jim Santa (USA).

Television: USA Network

Promoter: Gelb Promotions

(1-13-98)

Israel Cardona KO 3 Sam Girard

Ledyard, Connecticut: Girard, 135, Providence, Rhode Island, appeared to have too much respect for his frequent sparring partner, USBA lightweight champion Cardona, 135, Hartford, Connecticut, fighting like a man who never expected to win. "Sizzlin' Sam" won the first round and fought on even terms in the second, but conceded all too easily after tasting "Pito's" power in the third. Girard's friendly congratulations and beaming smile after the fight were

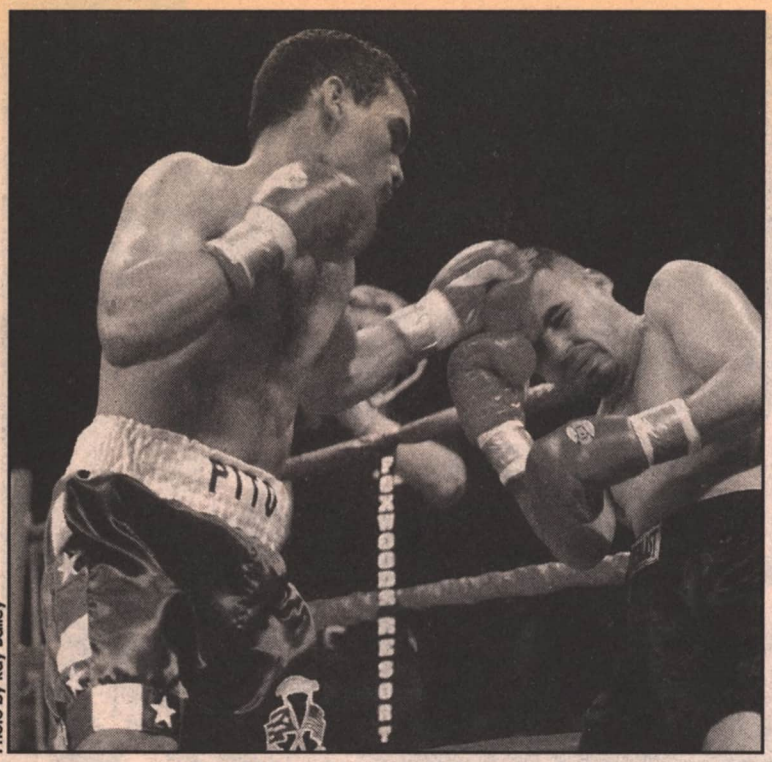


Photo by Ray Bailey

When Cardona opened up in the third, Girard fell apart

characteristic of a man who was just happy to be there, while his skills suggested he was not as overmatched as he thought.

The 23-year-old Cardona needed to impress after capturing an ugly, disputed decision over pesky David Sample in November. Through the first two rounds, though, Cardona did very little impressing in front of a hometown crowd at Foxwoods Casino. Girard, 25, used a strong left jab to dictate the pace in the first round, and scored with a handful of two- and three-punch combinations. Cardona finally retaliated with a straight left hand just before the bell.

After Cardona was warned by referee Ron Lipton (USA) for a low blow early in the second, Girard kept the pressure on by unloading bodyshots. Cardona opened up a bit late in the round, throwing bodypunches of his own and putting together a few good combinations to steal a round Girard had controlled.

The third—while it lasted—was all Pito. He cranked up a few left hooks, then hurt Girard with a punishing right along the ropes. As Girard struggled to work his way out of danger, Cardona scored with a perfect low-slung left hook to the chin, sending Sizzlin' Sam to his knees. Girard finally started trying to regain his footing as Lipton's count neared 10, but it was too late. The official time of the stoppage was 1:13 of the third. Girard, 17-4-1 (9), seemed fine less than a minute later as he hugged and congratulated Cardona, 28-2 (21), whose power and confidence had proven to be the difference.

Television: USA Network
Promoter: Gelb Promotions
(1-13-98)

Arthur Williams W 12 Adolpho Washington

Bay St. Louis, Mississippi: In a cruiserweight battle for the IBF's number-one rank, USBA titlist Williams comfortably outpointed former IBF champ Washington over 12 surprisingly exciting rounds at Casino Magic. After digging himself an early hole, Washington repeatedly tried to pummel Williams with desperate flurries, only to endure intense retaliation from the Las Vegas native. The result was a number of wild, memorable exchanges, the majority of which went in the eventual winner's favor.

After a tentatively waged first round where Williams' reach advantage kept Washington, 190, West Monroe, Louisiana, at bay, the USBA champ opened fire in round two. Williams, 188, threw several strong combinations and stunned Washington with a powerful left uppercut in the waning moments of the round. Washington, 30, came out more aggressive in the third, but Williams, 33, captured another round by landing 10 unanswered punches just before the bell.

The action heated up in the fourth, as Washington shook his opponent with a counter left hand and followed up by working the body. After an exchange of powerful left hooks, both fighters let it all hang out in the final 20 seconds, engaging in a brutal give-and-take that brought the crowd to its feet at the bell. The fifth, sixth, and seventh rounds were fairly evenly contested, but Washington appeared to be capturing control by virtue of Williams' unsteady legs and generally weary appearance.

Williams gained his second wind in the eighth, pinning Washington along the ropes and leaning in effectively. Williams was staggered by a left toward the end of the ninth, but came back in the 10th round with a strong right hook and a left-right combination. Washington hardly threw a punch in the 10th, finally appearing to show the effects of having to boil down the day before after weighing in 2½ pounds over the class limit. But in keeping with the unpredictable nature of the fight, Washington came back in the penultimate round to fire away wildly—and somewhat effectively—as he searched for a knockout.

Inexplicably, though, it was Williams who pursued the knockout in the 12th, landing a tremendous right to the jaw and a followup combination. Though Williams, 28-4-1 (20), had nothing left in the final minute, he had assured himself of having his hand raised by referee Elmo Adolph (USA) by continuing to engage Washington, 26-5-2 (15), right up until the final bell.

The judges voted unanimously in Williams' favor. Chester Comeaux (USA) scored the fight 117-113, while C.D. Jenkins (USA) and Fred Steinwinder III (USA) slighted Washington a bit with their scores of 120-110 and 119-111, respectively. THE RING had it 117-113 for Williams, now the top contender to the IBF belt held by Imamu Mayfield.

Television: USA Network
Promoter: Murad Muhammad
(1-6-98)

Jesse James Leija W 12 Joel Perez

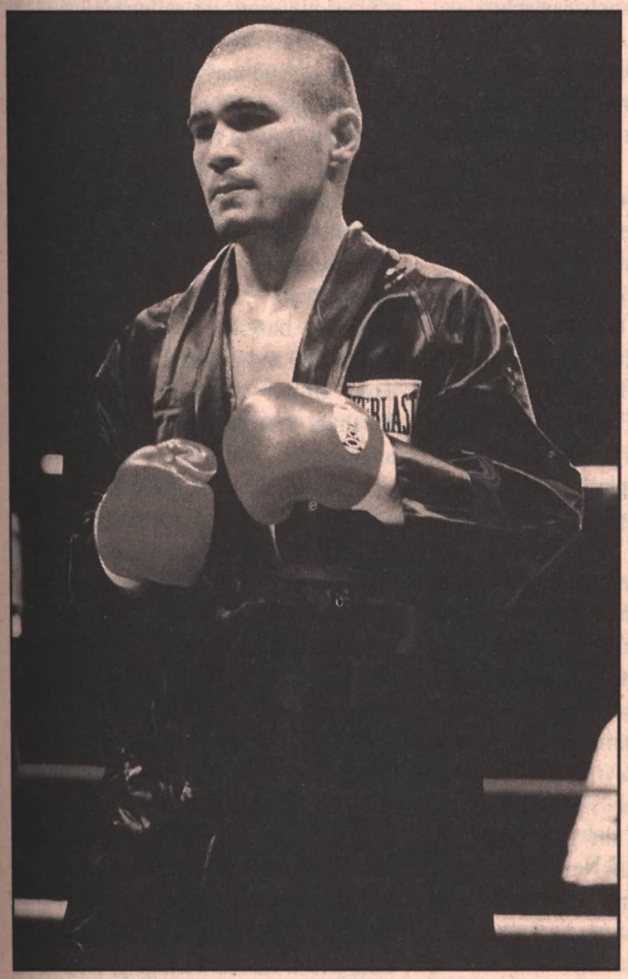
San Antonio, Texas: In a rematch of a close, bloody, at times dirty fight from last March 22, former WBC junior lightweight champion Leija once again prevailed over the otherwise unbeaten Perez. Though there was more bloodshed and the confrontation did once again go the distance, Perez wasn't able to keep it as

close the second time around, suffering a rather wide unanimous decision loss.

Fighting before a wildly supportive crowd at Freeman Coliseum, Leija, 133¾, San Antonio, dominated the early rounds to jump out to a healthy lead on the scorecards. He worked the body with left hooks and straight right hands in the first round. After Perez, 135, Houston, used his jab and overhand right to establish himself over the first half of the second round, Leija cracked the 26-year-old with a pair of right hands that forced Perez to desperately clutch his opponent. Leija, 31, landed another tremendous right hand to the jaw with 15 seconds remaining in the third, then scored with roundhouse rights that opened a gash over Perez' left eye in the fourth.

As if he hadn't dug himself a large enough hole by losing the first four rounds, matters got worse for Perez in the fifth when he was penalized by referee Rafael Ramos (USA) for illegal use of the head. Leija came out for the sixth round with a slight nick over his right eye, but it was unclear whether it necessarily came from the Perez butt. Regardless, a riled Leija scored with a left to the jaw/right to the body combination, followed by several rattlers to Perez' chin.

Perez had his best round in a thrilling eighth. He struck midway through with a counter right that wobbled Leija more than any of his shots had wobbled Perez, but Leija regained his balance and fired back in a wild exchange. Perez landed several straight left hands at the end of the round and appeared capable of rallying back to make things interesting, but it was not to be.



Leija prevailed once again over Perez

Leija, 35-3-2 (14), scored with a monstrous right hook to open the ninth and kept Perez, 23-2-2 (12), under fire with a brutal 15-punch flurry. Leija unloaded a three-punch combination to Perez' rock-hard chin in the 10th, then threw a hook to the body that echoed throughout the arena. Though the cut over Leija's eye worsened in the 11th, he cruised through the final two rounds without ever being in danger of a knockout.

Judge David Hess (USA) scored the fight 117-110, Gerald Ritter (USA) had it 118-110, and Gale Van Hoy (USA) saw it 119-108, all for Leija. THE RING had Leija winning 119-109.

Television: USA Network

Promoter: Main Events

(1-20-98)

Zolani Pethelo KO 4 Ratanapol Sor Vorapin

Songkhla, Thailand: Elongated South African Pethelo, 105, captured the IBF mini-flyweight title as he staged effective, precise rallies and dropped the defending champ Ratanapol, 105, to score an upset TKO victory in the fourth round.

It was a matchup of two southpaws. The Thai champ had the upper hand in the first two rounds, as he scored with solid lefts to the face and midsection of the taller opponent. Pethelo, 22, concentrated on moving away from Ratanapol's opening attacks, and occasionally retaliated with long jabs and straight lefts. The South African found his range with accurate counters in the third, though Ratanapol, 24, kept going forward with his aggressiveness.

In the fourth, Pethelo threw sharp punches and decided to mix it up with the more powerful champ, a risk that would pay off immediately. The South African caught the shorter champ with crisp combinations and had him reeling to the ropes. Ratanapol attempted to fight back with his back to the ropes, but he absorbed severe punishment from Pethelo's incessant flurries. Ratanapol lost his balance so completely that it looked like he was sitting down on the lower ropes. Referee Billy Miles (Australia) issued an eight-count and was about to make them resume fighting. But the champ was hurt so badly that he fell down again. The ref then declared a halt to award the victory to the unheralded 10th-ranked IBF contender. Pethelo raised his mark to 11-2-2 (6). Ratanapol fell to 34-3-1 (27).

It was the seventh defense of Ratanapol's second reign since regaining the IBF title on a 12-round decision over Jun Arlos in May 1996. In his first reign, the Thailander registered 12 defenses before he lost his title on the scale prior to fighting Lee Castillo on March 16, 1996. It seemed only a matter of time before Ratanapol, who was often reported to have a severe weight problem, would lose due to the effects of his extreme weight reduction.

Reportedly, Col. Banchu, Ratanapol's promoter and manager, had signed a five-year promotional agreement with Don King to look forward to a unification bout with WBC champ Ricardo Lopez, but the bout is unlikely to happen now, given Ratanapol's defeat. Ratanapol will attempt to fight again in the 105-pound division in order to regain the IBF title from Pethelo.

(12-28-97)

Joe Koizumi

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Lewis vs Briggs

(Continued from page 37)

Network uses, and it's got the Winter X-Games beat hands down.

Another of Briggs-Lewis' appealing factors is that this is the only heavyweight fight that can be made between two true latter-day men of culture. At its core, modern-era boxing blossomed in its earliest incarnations as a gentleman's sport. Any lout can fight, but anyone who has ever put on a pair of gloves quickly discovers that pugilism is as much a mental exercise as a physical undertaking. Boxing has fallen a long way from its roots in athletic clubs to the seedy image it has cultivated for the past several decades. Perhaps some good will come of a match between a couple of fellows you could take to a fine restaurant to sample French cuisine and classic wine without worrying about the maitre' de getting sucker-punched.

Lewis basks in his proper English persona. Briggs is atypical of his upbringing in Brooklyn's hard streets. Both look natural in a tailored suit, or even a tux and tails. Briggs plays the piano and is a whiz with a computer. Lewis fancies classical music and probably never misses tea time. Either could be as comfortable in the balcony at an opera as ringside at a major fight. They are more likely to trade stock tips at the weigh-in than break out into a knockdown, drag-out brawl. Heck, Briggs wouldn't even look Foreman in the eyes when he and Big George met at the scales. Some observers thought he was psyched out. More likely, Briggs was just showing respect for his elder. These are two guys who have strived to keep their sport out of the gutter and carry themselves in a manner that exudes more class than crass.

Hairstyles and chosen professions aside, the one passion that Lewis and Briggs share is an affinity for the game of chess. Lewis was playing in his locker room before the Golota fight up until the moment he laced up the gloves. Briggs plays on the streets of New York. They take the chess-board mentality to the ring, which may give us a hint of what will transpire when they face off.

That's not to say no meaningful punches will be landed. Lewis has become a fast starter, as evidenced by his blitzkrieg of Golota, and his right hand stands clearly as the most potent weapon in the division. Briggs abandoned his trademark kamikaze start for a more cautious approach against Foreman, but he also showed he has a major league right of his own and a mean hook to the body when he chooses to throw it. Neither is a defensive genius.

Physically, the two are well-matched. Lewis is an imposing 6'5" and 250 pounds, give or take a few, and his mere presence seems to take something out of lesser men. Golota looked like he was being led to a guillotine on his way to the ring. Akinwande chose the shame of disqualification over the prospect of engaging Lewis in any sort of combat. McCall actually cried like a baby. Sure, the champion has his critics, but none of them have actually had to find the courage to stand up to this giant specimen.

Briggs is a tad smaller at 6'4" and 225 pounds, but he is a marvelous athlete with a physique every bit as impressive as the champion's. He has the size to look Lewis in the eye, and may be the more fluid and natural fighter. He has the raw strength to hold his own in the clinches, as he did more and more with Foreman as the fight made its way into the later rounds. In his best moments, Briggs was able to move the usually stoic Foreman where he wanted him to go.

Lewis has the overall edge in both experience and power, a potent combination. Under the tutelage of trainer Emanuel Steward, he has shown steady improvement and become an increasingly aggressive and dangerous force. His jab won't ever be compared to that of Larry Holmes, but he has learned how to use it to maneuver opponents into position for the right-hand bomb. And Lewis is increasingly motivated to look for the knockout as he tries to force a showdown with Holyfield.

Briggs' best asset is his speed of hand and foot. He has above-average footwork, although he is a long way from mastering ring generalship, and is able to use his thoroughbred legs to move in and out of scoring range. Briggs also is able to string together quick flurries that accumulate in their effect. He has a stinging, accurate jab and is able to use his hand speed to get

away with surprise lead hooks and rights that can keep an opponent off-balance and flustered.

The most intriguing factors in this fight are mental and emotional. Lewis has every reason to suffer a letdown after having yet another big fish wiggle off the hook. Briggs was unimpressive enough in his victory against Foreman to be overlooked, and Lewis showed what can happen in an instance of lost focus in his first bout with McCall. Or he may go the other way, and leave himself open in an overeager attempt to create a stir with another impressive performance. His arrogance could work for him or against him.

The biggest questions lie with the challenger. He all but collapsed under fire against Wilson, but showed heart and confidence against Foreman. He pulled himself together and did his best work in the later rounds, answering questions about his stamina at the same time. His chin and durability remain to be proven. Although he did take some solid blows from Foreman, the old man is simply not the puncher he once was, nor the puncher Lewis is today. Briggs' biggest task will be to cope with the pressure of the event that he admitted nearly got to him in the Foreman fight.

The sequence of events leading up to Lewis-Briggs bodes well. The champion has a history of being involved in either bizarre episodes or crowd-pleasing shootouts. Briggs has taken a major step forward and has yet to be involved in a bad fight himself. All said, Lewis and Briggs have the ingredients to make for at least a decent scrap.

If the challenger can muster the courage he showed in his last outing and take his game to yet a higher level, the fight could actually make for a pleasant surprise. Never forget what Douglas did to Tyson, or Foreman's shocker over Moorer. Anything can happen when big men meet, especially when the public is lulled by low expectations.

So sit back and enjoy Lewis-Briggs as best you can without thinking of what might have been. Count your blessings. It could be Holyfield against Akinwande, Vaughn Bean, or Frans Botha, or Lewis against the dreaded Mavrovic. As we wait for Holyfield-Lewis, this might be as good as it gets. ■

Michael Grant

(Continued from page 39)

include a win over former cruiserweight champion Al Cole, but the rest of his resume was adorned with the names of such trialhorses as Ross Puritty, Ray Anis, Louis Monaco, and Jorge Luis Gonzalez.

Izon, who had become a favorite HBO opponent, had looked good in a losing effort to Tua in late-1996, and tremendous in a victory over Lou Savarese last November. The big question mark was whether the 6'2" Izon, who had handled the 6'5" Savarese with relative ease, could repeat such a fine performance against the even taller Grant.

Although the technically solid and crisp-punching Izon enjoyed an excellent first round, it became readily apparent in the second that Grant was going to be much tougher than either Savarese or Tua. One of many rapier jabs by Grant, 25, opened a nasty gash on Izon's left eye that would require four stitches. With the cut as much of a hindrance as Grant's enormous size and strength, Izon was stopped at 1:07 of round five after Grant unloaded 45 unanswered punches.

Grant's has the kind of size and raw physical skills that make people gush over his future prospects. *Sport* magazine recently named him, along with football's Warrick Dunn, baseball's Jose Cruz Jr., and basketball's Kevin Garnett among the "10 To Watch In 1998." His trainer, Don Turner, who works with a pretty fair heavyweight in Evander Holfield, shamelessly predicts: "He has the potential to be the greatest heavyweight champion of all-time." And his co-manager, Bill Cayton, says: "The tools are there for him to be not only the best, but the most exciting heavyweight champion in history."

Not everyone, however, has become caught up in the hype. Refreshingly, one of those is the fighter himself. Grant is the first to admit he still has a way to go.

"I realize I have a lot to learn," said the surprisingly candid Grant from the home in Norristown, Pennsylvania, that he shares with his fiancee Tanya Nicole Daniels, and their one-year-old son Mikheyl. "As a football, basketball, and baseball player, I was great, a coach's dream. Those sports came

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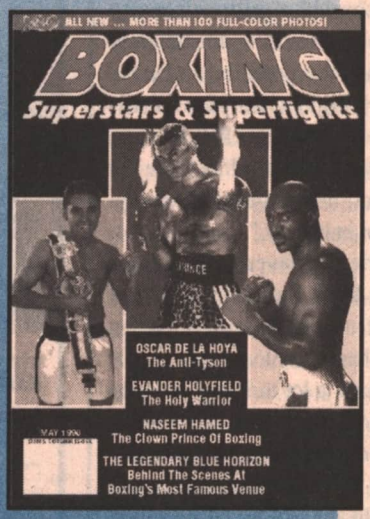

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Michael Grant

(Continued from page 55)

very easy to me and so did the cockiness. With boxing, I knew I had to humble myself and draw the line. When I fight for a world title, I want to know that I'm going to win, not just put up a great fight. That's still a ways off, but I know I've got plenty of time. I'm in no rush at all. I'll know when the time is right, and I'm not rushing anything."

"In three or four fights Michael will be ready to challenge anybody in the world," said Turner. "We are three fights away from being the best. The moment this guy starts throwing combinations, the other guy is out of the fight."

Izon, who is as much of a sportsman as he is a gentleman, begs to differ with that assessment. He and his trainer, Alton Merkerson, say they vehemently complained to referee Frank Cappuccino about how high Grant was wearing his protective cup, and were told the problem would be rectified before the first bell rang. Instead, Grant was allowed to wear his cup well above normal limits, and it appeared to be covering a portion of his stomach.

"Everything went wrong for me in that fight, and much of it was beyond my control," lamented Izon. "I was afraid to throw a bodypunch because I would be penalized, and he kept punching me below the belt and was not penalized."

While Izon does admit that Grant is "very strong and not a bad fighter," he adamantly insists he had victory in his grasp when the fight was stopped. "I had studied his films and saw him get tired against Al Cole," he said. "Our game plan was to work the body in the early rounds, then go for the head in the later rounds when he was tired. But I couldn't work the body because his protector was so high. When they stopped the fight, I swear I was not hurt, and I could feel how tired he was. I was about to go into the game plan. He does have a very good jab, but I never felt his right hand. When he threw his [right], I threw mine and landed it first. I just don't understand, if he is so good, why does he have to use so many fouls like holding and hitting below the belt?"

Craig Hamilton is a boxing memorabilia collector who was introduced to Grant through his friendship with Holmes, for whom he had done some endorsement work. It was Hamilton who introduced Grant to his current co-managers Cayton and Steve Lott. Hamilton still serves as part of the management team, and is quick to concede that Grant is still learning his craft and doing things that would best be forgotten.

"We [the management team] are his toughest critics, but he realizes it is all for his own good," Hamilton said. "Sometimes Michael still armpunches, and because he is so strong, he can still bust a guy up. Because his physical skills can carry him such a long way, we have to avoid him taking the easy way out. Other sports always came so easy for him that he took them for granted. He has to realize that can't happen in boxing. Against Izon, he could take a right hand flush on the face, and it did not look so serious. Against somebody like Lennox Lewis, the result might be different."

Some critics compare Grant to Ernie Terrell, who briefly held the WBA version of the heavyweight title when Muhammad Ali was exiled from boxing for draft evasion in the '60s. Terrell was also very tall, but was best known for his punch-and-clinch style that put more fans to sleep than it did opponents. When Grant decisioned Puritty and Anis in extremely dull bouts, some naysayers were convinced that Grant was another over-hyped prospect who would not fight beyond his level of competition. Cayton says that is nonsense and insists that it was the opponents who did not come to fight, not the other way around.

"Some opponents get hit once by him and think of nothing other than defense for the rest of the fight," said Cayton. "Of course that makes for a bad fight. But Michael has sparred about 80 rounds with Ray Mercer and gave him the fight of his life. He fought several rounds with Holyfield, and it was Holyfield who cut it down. Michael is not afraid to fight, and is only going to get better as he learns more about technique and slipping punches.

"The comparisons to Terrell are only reflective of Michael's inexperience," added Hamilton. "He really is a lot better than that. He is rapidly developing skills that Terrell didn't have and couldn't have; the most important being the fact that when he gets clipped, he looks to fight, not hold. In defense of the dull decision over Puritty,

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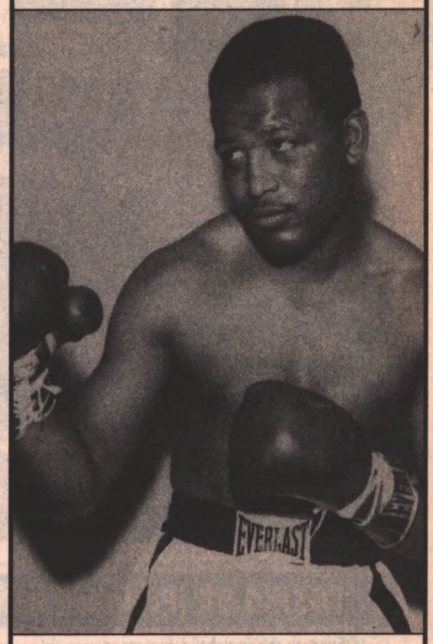

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Michael Grant

(Continued from page 57)

in one round Puritty's punch stat was under 10. And Anis was not much more scintillating. Like so many other opponents, they go south when they feel his strength and just quit."

Although Grant's entire amateur career consisted only of 11 fights, of which he lost one, it would be difficult for him not to get too cocky, because athletic excellence has always come so naturally for him. On the streets of Chicago he always played ball with people older than him and regularly outplayed them. Oddly, he wasn't even considered a hero in the neighborhood because, he says, sensational street football and basketball players were common. While Grant always took his talent for granted, fortunately for him he never took the love of his family or the religious faith that his mother instilled in him for granted. Even if he had tried, he probably would never have gotten away with it. His mother, Otha, didn't tolerate any nonsense.

Otha worked in a candy factory making Baby Ruths and Lifesavers, and his father, Clifford, who died in 1986, worked in a steel factory. Besides Grant, there were four brothers and two sisters, and Otha demanded they go to church several times a week. Grant, a non-denominational Christian, realized early on the strength he drew from the church, as well as the ecumenical bond it supplied for the family. He still prays several times a day. He also developed an affinity for playing the piano and organ, which he continues to do. What makes him even more of an enigma is the fact that for many years he even sang in the church choir. There are not many heavyweight contenders who could boast of that.

Grant saw many of his friends hauled off to jail or killed after joining two local gangs, the Vice Lords and the Disciples, but he never got closer to trouble than the fringes of mischief. At age 14, he was picked up with some other youngsters by the police on Halloween night for "standing on the corner and scaring people," and at age 16 he was cited for drinking a beer in public. After graduating from William Rainy Harper High School, his less than stellar grades precluded him from getting an immediate sports scholarship. Instead, he enrolled in Mount San Antonio College in Pomona, California, to get his grades up and hopefully qualify for a scholarship. Around that time he was also invited to the Kansas City Royals baseball team spring training camp because they had a keen interest in his 90 mile-per-hour fastball. It did not take long, however, for the fun-loving Grant to flunk out of college, and head over to Fullerton, where he did not impress anybody with his academic fervor.

While goofing off for a weekend in Las Vegas in early-'93, Grant's fortunes changed forever when he had a chance meeting with referee Richard Steele. Steele was impressed by his tremendous size and natural grace, and invited him back for a weekend to size up his boxing potential. Within a few months, Grant participated in the Las Vegas Golden Gloves, which he won, and then won the National Golden Gloves soon afterward. Before turning professional under the tutelage of Gladys Steele, Richard's wife, Grant got invaluable experience traveling to Great Britain to serve as a sparring partner for Michael Bentt. Bentt had just come off a sterling win over Tommy Morrison and was preparing for a bout with Herbie Hide in England.

"Michael was very much a novice then, but you couldn't help but be high on him," said Stan Hoffman, who managed Bentt. "He still needs a bit more schooling, but, fortunately, nobody knows that better than him. He is a very smart young man and that is what makes him so dangerous. He won't allow himself to be rushed."

After seven pro fights, Grant left Gladys Steele because of the potential for a conflict of interest stemming from her husband's role as a Las Vegas referee. After signing with Cayton and Lott, he moved to Norristown to be near Turner and recently bought a home there. His fiancee, a Grambling University graduate whom he met in Las Vegas, is employed as a behavioral therapist for children aged 3-17, and has become a sort of unofficial scout for him by studying potential opponents on television.

"I compare all the up-and-coming fighters and try to realize their strong points and weak points," said Daniels. "[Andrew] Golota for example, he looked afraid [against Lennox Lewis], but had good skills even though he was rough around the edges. And Chris Byrd might make a good match someday."

She admits to the fact that she used to worry about Michael, but has grown to have so much confidence in his ability that the concern has waned. Now, she insists, "I just worry about the other guy."

Cayton has been doing the same and insists he would have no reservations about matching Grant with any opponent right now, Holyfield and Lewis included. "Michael is an extraordinary physical specimen," Cayton said. "Besides being a tremendous fighter, he is a multifaceted man. He has a great sense of humor, is a superb classical pianist, and a great singer. Michael will become the heavyweight champion of the world. I can't imagine what he will become afterwards."

First things first, Bill, as Grant would be quick to tell you. ■

Robert Mladinich, a freelance writer based in New York City, is a regular contributor to this magazine.

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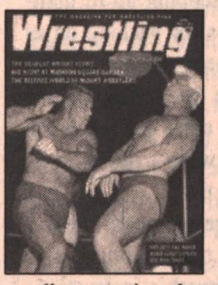

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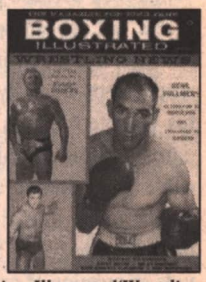

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October 1963 ***Boxing:*** Cassius Clay, Joe Lynch, Frankie Narvaez, Tommy Loughran. ***Wrestling:*** Crusher vs. Verne Gagne, Tony Manous, The Dirty Daltons, results. **$25**

February 1964 ***Boxing:*** Sonny Liston, Joey Archer, 1963 in review, Cassius Clay. ***Wrestling:*** Bruno Sammartino vs. Gorilla Monsoon, Emile Dupre, Bruiser vs. Bob Ellis, results. **$30**

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Manfredy vs. Gatti

(Continued from page 42)

by many as the greatest action fighter on the scene today. Indiana Jones and Batman have nothing on this guy.

You can always catch movies with exploding bodies on HBO, but Gatti's fights are more compelling than the average Bruce Willis flick because the blood being spilled is real, not dabbed-on ketchup, and viewers have taken a keen interest in whether the suspense-prone brawler would land one of his patented bombs before he passed the damage-control point of no return. The cable giant ponied up $1-million, Gatti's largest purse ever, in the expectation that their favorite blood bank again would provide an evening of rousing entertainment.

"We are about putting on the best fights," HBO Sports president Seth Abraham said in December after the HBO debut of newly signed Naseem Hamed, a bout in which Hamed, the flamboyant British featherweight, was down three times before stopping Kevin Kelley. "We do not have house fighters."

Putting on the best fights is an admirable goal, and often unachievable under prevailing conditions, but make no mistake: HBO does have house fighters. All things being equal, it would be much preferred that their HBO appearances end in triumph. But Gatti, a fan and HBO favorite, has thrilled and exasperated all concerned by pushing the envelope so frequently.

The master plan going in was for Gatti to win, hopefully in spectacular fashion, and move on to even bigger and better fights with exponentially larger ratings. There even was talk of him stepping down to junior lightweight one more time to engage Hamed in a high-visibility showdown, in which the winner would emerge as a bona fide superstar.

Manfredy had piqued HBO's interest with an entertaining, 12-round unanimous decision over Wilson Rodriguez on February 22, 1997, on the undercard of a show headlined by Gatti's rematch decision over Patterson. The East Chicago, Indiana, resident had a shtick and a story, which, along with his come-to-fight style, made him a desirable opponent for Gatti. He would make things interesting, all right. But nobody connected with Gatti—not HBO, not Main Events, not J Russell Peltz, certainly not Gatti himself—figured Manfredy would actually *win*.

"They didn't think I could punch," said Manfredy, who is promoted by Cedric Kushner. "I knew I could punch hard enough to get the job done."

Working against Manfredy would be a distinct size disadvantage. Not only is Gatti, whose IBF junior lightweight championship was not on the line, stepping up to lightweight, he is notorious for packing on as many as 15 pounds between the official weigh-in and the time he climbs into the ring. Manfredy, on the other hand, still can make 130 easily and wasn't likely to be much over 135 by fight time.

The size difference between the two men was apparent as they stood nose to nose to receive Hedgepeth's instructions before the opening bell. If Gatti had the firepower to survive the rough stretches and starch the likes of Ruelas and Grove, didn't it figure that he would have too much muscle for the smaller Manfredy to withstand?

Manfredy, of course, had contemplated that question and concluded that it still was a risk worth taking. Nothing ventured, nothing gained.

"This was my opportunity to make a statement, to show the world who Angel Manfredy is," Manfredy, who received a career-high $200,000, said in the weeks leading up to the most important fight of his career. "You don't let opportunities like that pass, because you might never get one again.

"Besides," he said with the confidence of someone who had glimpsed the future and liked the view, "I feel unbeatable. I met The Man. He gave me another chance at life."

"The Man," in this instance, was a forgiving God. Manfredy's first name might conjure images of heavenly choirs, but his life on the street was one of reckless, wanton abandon, of a soul in distress. It was even money whether he would go down for the permanent count on some lonely stretch of highway before someone dropped him for a 10-count inside the ropes.

"I had 11 accidents," Manfredy said of his unfortunate driving record. "Went through eight cars. Some of them weren't my fault, but most of them were. See, Angel wasn't sober. Angel was doing devilish things. I let the streets get to me."

One day four years ago, the street quite literally got to him in the form of a wreck more extensive than the succession of fender benders in which he had been involved. This one left Manfredy with a distinguishing mark of another kind, a jagged cut in his forehead that required 265 stitches to close. The scar is a constant reminder of how close he had come to checking out forever.

So inebriated was Manfredy that, when a would-be rescuer, a Chicago fireman, attempted to assist him, he threw a punch at the guy.

"I thought he was trying to steal my car," Manfredy recalled. "I drove into a telephone pole. I was dazed.

"If I hadn't had my seat belt on, I would have been dead. But you know what? In a way, it might have been the best thing that ever happened to me. It made me take a look at myself, who I was and where I was going. I'd been all devil before then. Now I'm half-angel, half-devil. I guess you can say I'm a devil in disguise."

Having decided he would rather be known as one of boxing's best fighters than as one of its worst drivers, a rededicated, sobered-up Manfredy established himself as an entertainment value almost on a par with Gatti. Paying customers not only got Manfredy's skills, which are considerable, but the body graffiti and devil's mask he wears into the ring. A Manfredy fight—any Manfredy fight—is not unlike watching Dennis Rodman clean the glass for the Chicago Bulls. There is a practicality to it, to be sure, but it also is some outrageous show.

If there was a warning signal Gatti's advisers should have detected, it was that Manfredy has not had a significant cutting problem before or since his near-death experience. Every opponent hopes to unzip that Frankenstein scar that runs the width of his forehead, but no one ever does. Gatti, on the other hand, is beginning to develop the sort of reputation for bleeding that forever is attached to the crimson-stained likes of Henry Cooper, Chuck Wepner, and Vito Antuofermo.

"I felt pretty secure in the knowledge that if one of us was going to get cut, it wouldn't be me," Manfredy said.

So it has come to this for Gatti, who is only 25 but may be rushing headlong

toward an early expiration date as a major attraction: He could change his style, become a bit more cautious and defense-minded, but to do so would be to go against his nature. You don't ask Mark McGwire to bunt, even if it might prolong his career. Besides, it might be too late for Gatti to even contemplate making adjustments. For better or worse, he is what he is.

"There's that concern," Peltz, who, along with Main Events, co-promotes Gatti, said of his fighter's most obvious flaw. "But there's really nothing you can do about it. It's just something you have to live with. There's no operation that can fix that. When was the last time Arturo didn't get cut or swollen? That's the kind of face he has.

"[Former middleweight contender] Bennie Briscoe (whom Peltz also promoted), on the other hand, had deep-set eyes and skin that was like leather. I can only remember him being cut once in 96 fights, and it was a small cut."

Barring a skin graft in which he would receive Bad Bennie's non-rip flesh, Gatti likely will continue to try to beat the clock with furious assaults. It is an act that could be canceled at any time, but it is terrific theater for as long as it lasts. Enjoy it while you can.

There is a school of thought—voiced by, among others, HBO's Larry Merchant and Harold Lederman—that Gatti's heavy body attack was wearing down Manfredy and would ultimately have resulted in victory, were it not for the cut. One judge, Eugene Grant, scored the fight even, 66-66, through seven rounds, and colleagues Joseph Pasquale and Alan Rubenstein had Gatti behind by not-unbridgeable margins of 67-65 and 68-65 at the time of the stoppage.

"His right hand never hurt me, but the damage was already done," Gatti said before heading off this most recent batch of stitches. "I did the best I could. I was cut; that's the only reason he won the fight. I would have knocked him out in the later rounds."

Manfredy was impressed by Gatti's courage—"He showed the class of a warrior," he said—but he was not about to agree with those who suggested that he somehow had been granted an unfair advantage via the cut. The way it ended is the way it would have ended regardless, Manfredy insisted.

"I came out on top, just like I told you I would," he told the media. "This is what boxing is all about, you know? This is what I wanted. I wanted a war. I knew the only man who would give me that war was Arturo Gatti. He's the only man who could bring out the best in Angel Manfredy. That's why I wanted to fight him.

"People think I'm all talk, but I talk the talk and I walk the walk. We gave you the fight of the year. We promised you the fight of the year, and we gave you the fight of the year."

The year in boxing is young, but don't be surprised if 1998 ends with this one still near the bloody head of the class. ■

Bernard Fernandez, a regular contributor to this magazine, covers boxing for the Philadelphia Daily News.

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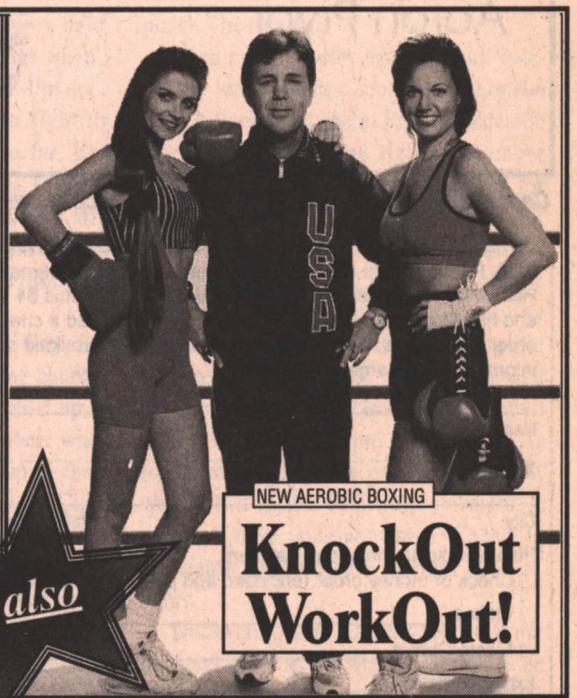

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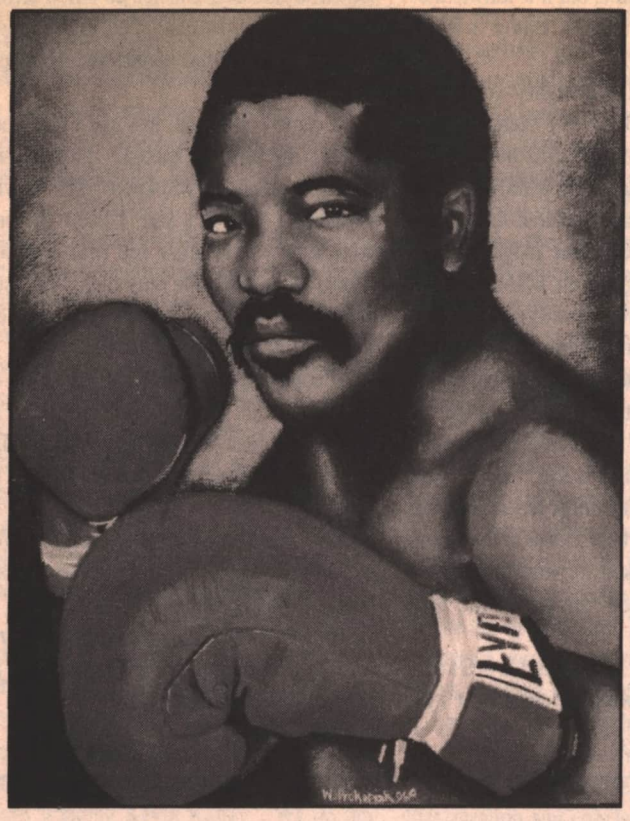

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New Faces

(Continued from page 16)

Cawley and picking his spots. He hurt Cawley with an overhand right midway into the first round that momentarily stunned his smaller adversary. In the second, Clay-Bey almost seemed to be toying with his opponent, leaning on the ropes while Cawley threw combinations at him without any effect. About a minute later, after luring his prey closer, Clay-Bey struck with the final punch. Cawley put his arms around his tormentor's waist in an attempt to brace his fall, but sunk to the canvas anyway, where he was counted out 2:32 into the second round.

"Clay-Bey's a good fighter, he's sharp, precise," said Cawley, 21-1 (16). "He's the toughest I've ever fought. I'm not sure what he hit me with; I just felt a hard blow to the head."

Clay-Bey was still restless afterward, going over and over the mistakes he felt he'd made and what he wanted to improve. He's already melted 35 pounds off the ample 260 he carried in the Olympics. In fact, back then, Clay-Bey looked as if *he* could play for the Packers.

Clay-Bey is living his dream now, though it took some time for him to convince himself to try. Despite a 60-9 amateur career, which included a World Championship in 1996, he hesitated before turning pro.

"I did not want to depend on physical abilities to get through life," said Clay-Bey, who received several scholarship offers for football when he graduated from high school before opting to attend community college. "But I started seeing other amateurs I used to box doing well at the pro level. Every time I turned on the TV, there was some guy I knew from the amateurs. It reminded me of high school when I was playing football. I got some offers, not from the Notre Dames and Nebraskas and schools like that, but from about a dozen schools—and I didn't follow through."

Clay-Bey is not a hard read. He's a family man with four kids, ranging in age from eight months to 13 years old. He has a pleasant smile and a pleasing personality. You discover that he does indeed have other options to make a living other than boxing. After a stint as a cook, he worked as a welder, then became a corrections officer in Hartford.

"I don't have to box," he insisted. "I don't feel a lot of pressure to box. It's a secure feeling to know I can do other things. I think that's good. I don't feel like there's a gun to my head to box."

He does, however, feel a little misunderstood. After losing a controversial 10-8 decision to eventual gold medal winner Vladimir Klitchko, of the Ukraine, at the Atlanta Olympics, he told the assembled press, "Smile, it's not the end of the world." That attitude led many to believe Clay-Bey lacked the emotional determination to succeed as a pro. That irritated the fighter, whose original intention was not to become a pro. He had his family, his wife Valerie, and his job to go back to. Boxing was something he did to lose weight and feed his competitive nature, not something he would need as a last resort to support his family.

When he's out running, Clay-Bey often thinks about the criticism levied at him like a sledgehammer during that time: He was too lazy, lacked motivation, and was too nice to be a killer in the ring. Then there was the age factor.

"My age has nothing to do with what I'm doing in the ring," Clay-Bey said. "Right now, it's not an issue. But when I lose, that's when it will come out. I'm not a 32-year-old boxer who's been fighting since he was five years old. So far, I've noticed, no one criticizes the way I fight. I don't hear anything about that. I'm still growing in this sport at 32 years old. I don't think age will prevent me from progressing."

Looking at the slender Clay-Bey, it's hard to think of him as ever being chubby. At one point in 1992, he ballooned up to 275 pounds. "It got to the point where when I tied my shoes, I had to come up to catch my breath. I'd break into a sweat," Clay-Bey said. "Of all things, I'm a competitor. I went to the gym basically to shed some weight. I was athletic, I played basketball. But I wasn't completely happy with myself. I had to do something about the weight."

He began hitting the heavybag, running regularly, and training at a local gym. The pounds began to come off. A few months later, the gym's trainer, Francisco Zayes, asked him if he would like to step into the ring. Hesitant at first, Clay-Bey decided to give it a try. He lost his first two fights, and won his next eight, making it all the way to the national Golden Gloves tournament.

Every time Clay-Bey attempted something, he received more than he bargained for. As an amateur, his highest goal was to a win a national championship. He did. When he received an invitation to the Olympic Trials, he was just happy to go. He won there, too. As a pro, who knows how far Clay-Bey can go?

To Clay-Bey, he may have actually won already.

"If I reach the championship level as a pro, I'll be happy," he said. "But I think I'll be really happy when I'm no longer boxing. It'll give me a chance to sit back and no longer ask myself the question: How far can I go with this? I'll be already satisfied because at least I know I tried. I can live with that." ■

Goldstein

(Continued from page 33)

Three weeks later, his face still sore from the Ramos fight, Stepniewski was back in the Garden, where he lost a decision to Lou Hicks. "My face hurt every time it looked like he was going to throw a punch," he recalled.

Then came injuries that kept him inactive for long stretches, and a loss in London to Jack Bodell and one in Rome to Eduardo Corletti that kept The Hebrew Bomber from achieving the heights predicted for him. So he said *shalom* to the ring. (Or would have if he'd known what it means).

Other than wishing he could fight the matches he lost over again, today Stepniewski recalls his career as Big Ski Goldstein with no regret. "I got pretty well known and popular, and accomplished quite a bit for a kid from Milwaukee." As for the ethnic ruse, he points out that "if we'd left it as this Polish heavyweight, it wouldn't have gone anywhere. Changing my name to Goldstein opened a lot of doors."

Discovering after all these years that my boyhood idol was not who he claimed to be was naturally a large shock. But it could have turned out worse.

At least Big Ski Goldstein hadn't turned into Sheila Goldstein. ■

Pete Ehrmann is a freelance writer based in West Allis, Wisconsin, and a regular contributor to this magazine.

WORLDWIDE RATINGS

The ratings of the three major governing bodies recognized by The Ring are supplied by the organizations themselves. They are updated on these pages as soon as they are made available to us. In this issue, the WBA ratings were complied as of December 1997, the WBC as of December 1997, and the IBF as of December 1997.

HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Lennox Lewis (GB)	C	–	–
Evander Holyfield (USA)	–	C	C
Zeljko Mavrovic (CROA)	1	2	6
Ray Mercer (USA)	2	3	4
John Ruiz (USA)	3	9	–
David Tua (NZ)	4	–	–
Oliver McCall (USA)	5	–	–
Andrew Golota (POL)	6	–	–
Larry Donald (USA)	7	–	–
Buster Douglas (USA)	8	–	–
Jerry Ballard (USA)	9	7	11
Shannon Briggs (USA)	10	–	–
Henry Akinwande (GB)	–	1	–
Jade Scott (USA)	28	4	–
Kirk Johnson (CAN)	–	5	–
Michael Moorer (USA)	16	6	5
Orlin Norris (USA)	–	8	9
Francois Botha (SA)	15	10	2
Vaughn Bean (USA)	–	–	1
Hasim Rahman (USA)	26	–	3
Obed Sullivan (USA)	–	–	7
Chris Byrd (USA)	17	–	8
Ike Ibeabuchi (USA)	–	11	10

CRUISERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Marcelo Dominguez (ARG)	C	–	–
Fabrice Tiozzo (FRA)	–	C	–
Imamu Mayfield (USA)	–	–	C
Juan Carlos Gomez (CUBA)	1	2	–
Johnny Nelson (GB)	2	–	–
Terry Dunstan (GB)	3	4	12
Jacob Mofokeng (SA)	4	11	3
Montell Griffin (USA)	5	–	–
Alexei Ilin (RUS)	6	–	–
Yosukezan Nishijima (JAP)	7	–	–
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	8	–	–
Dale Brown (CAN)	9	–	–
Arthur Williams (USA)	10	9	4
Ezequiel Paixao (BRA)	–	1	–
Nate Miller (USA)	13	3	9
Adopho Washington (USA)	–	5	–
Tiwon Taylor (USA)	29	6	–
Ken Murphy (USA)	–	7	5
Alexander Gurov (UKR)	–	8	–
Darren Corbett (IRE)	14	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Uriah Grant (USA)	–	–	6
Adolpho Washington (USA)	–	–	7
Torsten May (GER)	–	–	8
Faustino Gonzalez (COL)	–	–	10

LT. HEAVYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Roy Jones (USA)	C	–	–
Lou Del Valle (USA)	–	C	–
William Guthrie (USA)	–	–	C
Michael Nunn (USA)	1	7	–
Graciano Rocchigiani (GER)	2	–	5
Richard Frazier (USA)	3	4	8
Merqui Sosa (DR)	4	6	–
Muhammad Siluvangi (ZAI)	5	3	10
Ole Klemetsen (NOR)	6	8	6
Hisashi Teraji (JAP)	7	–	–
Fabian Chancelay (ARG)	8	–	–
Mark Prince (GB)	9	–	–
Chris Eubank (GB)	10	–	–
Virgil Hill (USA)	–	1	3
Dario Matteoni (ARG)	14	2	–
Richard Hall (USA)	25	5	7
Anthony Bigeni (AUS)	–	9	–
Eddy Smulders (HOLL)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Will Taylor (USA)	24	–	4
Darrin Allen (USA)	–	–	9

SUPER MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Thulane Malinga (SA)	C	–	–
Frank Liles (USA)	–	C	–
Charles Brewer (USA)	–	–	C
Vincenzo Nardiello (ITA)	1	–	–
Robin Reid (GB)	2	–	–
Jorge Castro (ARG)	3	–	–
Herol Graham (GB)	4	3	–
Dean Francis (GB)	5	–	–
Roberto Duran (PAN)	6	–	–
Eric Lucas (CAN)	7	9	–
Thomas Tate (USA)	8	6	5
Richie Woodhall (GB)	9	–	–
Mads Larsen (DEN)	10	–	–
Andrei Shkalikov (RUS)	–	1	4
Mauricio Amaral (BRA)	14	2	3
Bruno Girard (FRA)	21	4	–
Francis Dean (GB)	–	5	–
Antoine Byrd (USA)	13	7	–
Zafarou Ballogou (TOGO)	–	8	7
Byron Mitchell (USA)	29	10	–
Antoine Byrd (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Joseph Kiwanuka (UGA)	16	–	6
Reginaldo Andrade (BRA)	18	–	8
Reggie Johnson (USA)	–	–	9
Danny Trevino (USA)	–	–	10

MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Holmes (USA)	C	–	–
Julio Cesar Green (DR)	–	C	–
Bernard Hopkins (USA)	–	–	C
Hassine Cherifi (FRA)	1	–	–
Stephane Ouelette (CAN)	2	12	–
Robert McCracken (GB)	3	–	4
Julio Cesar Vazquez (ARG)	4	–	–
Kevin Palmer (USA)	5	–	–
Robert Allen (USA)	6	4	3
Brian Barbosa (USA)	7	6	–
Alex Zaitzev (RUS)	8	–	–
Urbano Gurrola (MEX)	9	–	–
Paul Vaden (USA)	10	8	10
Darren Obah (AUSTRL)	–	1	–
William Joppy (USA)	11	2	7
Peter Venancio (BRA)	–	3	–
Anthony Andrews (GUY)	18	5	–
Giovanni Pretorius (SA)	–	7	8
Abdula Ramadan (CAN)	–	9	9
Lloyd Bryan (USA)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Antoine Echols (USA)	14	–	5
Ryan Rhodes (GB)	–	–	6

JR. MIDDLEWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Keith Mullings (USA)	C	–	–
Laurent Boudouani (FRA)	–	C	–
Raul Marquez (USA)	8	–	C
Davide Ciarlante (ITA)	1	2	–
Ahmed Dottuev (BALK)	2	10	–
Terry Norris (USA)	3	–	–
Javier Castillejo (SPA)	4	12	–
Tony Marshall (USA)	5	5	–
Robert West (USA)	6	–	–
Earnie Artango (AUSTRL)	7	–	6
Kookyui Song (KOR)	9	–	–
Nick Rupa (USA)	10	–	12
Guillermo Jones (PAN)	12	1	–
Kevin Kelly (USA)	22	3	–
Robert McCracken (GB)	–	4	–
Tony Menefee (USA)	–	6	–
Pedro Ortega (MEX)	–	7	10
Jason Papillion (USA)	21	8	3
Mamadou Thiam (FRA)	20	9	–
Anthony Stephens (USA)	–	–	1
Vacant	–	–	2
Aaron Davis (USA)	–	–	4
Andrew Murray (GUY)	–	–	5
Yori Boy Campas (MEX)	–	–	7
Adrian Dodson (GB)	–	–	8
Sergio Luciano (BRA)	–	–	9

WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Oscar De La Hoya (USA)	C	–	–
Ike Quartey (GHA)	–	C	–
Felix Trinidad (PR)	–	–	C
Patrick Charpentier (FRA)	1	9	5
Derrell Coley (USA)	2	6	6
Andrei Pestryaev (RUS)	3	–	–
Ariel Chaves (ARG)	4	–	–
Wilfredo Rivera (PR)	5	–	–
Nicolas Cervera (COL)	6	–	–
Maxim Nesterenko (RUS)	7	–	–
Shannan Taylor (AUSTRL)	8	12	–
Vernon Forrest (USA)	9	–	7
Suk Hyun Yun (KOR)	10	–	–
Vacant	–	1	–
Andrei Pestraiev (RUS)	–	2	–
Jose Luis Lopez (MEX)	–	3	–
Oba Carr (USA)	–	4	12
Juan Negron (PR)	24	5	–
Jeff Malcolm (AUSTRL)	–	7	–
Andrew Murray (GUY)	16	8	–
Juan Carlos Candelo (COL)	–	10	–
Vincent Pettway (USA)	–	–	1
Mahenge Zulu (ZAI)	–	–	2
Raul Frank (USA)	–	–	3

Hugo Pineda (COL)	–	–	4
Hitonon Sato (JAP)	–	–	8
Juan Negron (PR)	–	–	9
Walter Saporiti (ARG)	–	–	10

JR. WELTERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Vacant	**C**	**–**	**–**
Khalid Rahilou (FRA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vince Phillips (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Julio Cesar Chavez (MEX)	1	3	–
Miguel Angel Gonzalez (MEX)	2	4	–
Kostya Tszyu (AUSTRL)	3	2	5
Rafael Ruelas (MEX)	4	–	–
Reggie Green (USA)	5	7	10
Diobelis Hurtado (CUB)	6	–	–
Soren Sondergaard (DEN)	7	–	–
Jong Hoon Yuh (KOR)	8	–	–
Sharmba Mitchell (USA)	9	1	2
Ricardo Silva (ARG)	10	–	–
Virgil McClendon (USA)	–	5	3
Freddy Rojas (CHILE)	26	6	8
Jean-Baptiste Mendy (FRA)	–	8	–
Elio Ortiz (VEN)	–	9	–
Guillermo Mosquera (COL)	–	10	–
Freddie Pendleton (USA)	–	–	1
Frankie Randall (USA)	–	–	4
Jan Bergman (SA)	14	12	6
Alex Carillo (COL)	–	–	7
Terron Millett (USA)	–	–	9

LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Steve Johnston (USA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Orzubek Nazarov (JAP)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Shane Mosley (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Cesar Bazan (MEX)	1	–	–
Arturo Gatti (USA)	2	–	–
Hiroyuki Sakamoto (JAP)	3	–	–
Daomai Sithkodam (THAI)	4	–	–
Jong Kwon Baek (KOR)	5	–	–
Billy Schwer (GB)	6	3	12
Marco Rudolph (GER)	7	–	–
David Dodi Tetteh (GHA)	8	12	11
Eduardo Morales (ARG)	9	2	2
George Scott (LIB)	10	–	–
Alberto Sicurella (ARG)	–	1	–
Ceppy Holman (INDO)	–	4	–
Leavander Johnson (USA)	–	5	7
Fred Ladd (USA)	–	6	9
Phillip Holiday (SA)	11	7	5
Israel Cardona (USA)	16	8	3
Colin Dunne (GB)	30	9	–
Rick Yoshimura (JAP)	17	10	–
Demetrius Ceballos (USA)	–	–	1
Justin Rowsell (AUSTRL)	–	–	4
Luis Flores (COL)	–	–	6
Acelino Freitas (BRA)	14	–	8
Wilson Palacio (COL)	–	–	10

JR.LIGHTWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Genaro Hernandez (USA)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Yong Soo Choi (KOR)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Arturo Gatti (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Robert Garcia (USA)	1	6	1
Jesus Chavez (USA)	2	–	–
Anatoly Alexandrov (RUS)	3	7	–
Djamel Lifa (FRA)	4	4	–
Justin Juuko (UGA)	5	–	–
Sirimongkol Singmanassuk (THAI)	6	–	–
Goyo Vargas (MEX)	7	–	–
Tom Johnson (USA)	8	5	4
Carlos Gerena (PR)	9	–	–
Yomato Mitani (JAP)	10	–	–
Gilbert Serrano (VEN)	–	1	–
Lakva Sim (MON)	–	2	–
Takanori Hatakeyama (JAP)	–	3	–
Harold Warren (USA)	19	8	2
Santos Rebolledo (VEN)	–	9	–
Edson Xuxa Nacimento (BRA)	–	10	–
Jaime Rangel (COL)	–	–	3
Ramon Ledon (CUBA)	–	–	5
Tracy Patterson (USA)	–	–	6
Barry Jones (GB)	22	–	7
Julien Lorcy (FRA)	17	–	8
Joel Casamayor (CUB)	18	–	9
Tomoma Yasuda (JAP)	–	–	10

FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Takito **Espinosa (PHIL)**	**C**	**–**	**–**
Wilfredo **Vazquez (PR)**	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vacant	**–**	**–**	**C**
Cesar Soto (MEX)	1	–	10
Juan Manuel Marquez (MEX)	2	–	–
Paul Ingle (GB)	3	12	–
Mbulune Nabaloun (BKF)	4	9	–
Manuel Medina (MEX)	5	–	–
Julio Rios (ARG)	6	10	–
Julio Chacon (ARG)	7	–	–
Mehdi Labdouni (FRA)	8	–	–

Takeo Imaoka (JAP)	9	–	–
Fred Norwood (USA)	10	2	–
Antonio Cermeno (VEN)	–	1	–
Genaro Rios (NIC)	–	3	–
Carlos Gerena (PR)	–	4	5
Frederic Perez (FRA)	–	5	–
Angel Vasquez (PR)	23	6	6
Victor Polo (COL)	–	7	3
Tony Wehbee (AUS)	22	8	8
Hector Lizarraga (USA)	–	–	1
Welcome Ncita (SA)	–	–	2
David Santos (USA)	27	–	4
Jesus Chavez (USA)	–	–	7
Teofilo Carranza (PER)	–	–	9

JR. FEATHERWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Erik Morales (MEX)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Vacant	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vuyani Bungu (SA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Wayne McCullough (IRE)	1	–	–
Reynante Jamili (PHIL)	2	–	7
Spencer Oliver (GB)	3	5	3
Michael Brodie (GB)	4	–	–
Jose Luis Bueno (MEX)	5	–	–
Pastor Maurin (ARG)	6	–	–
Guty Espadas (MEX)	7	–	–
Hector Acero-Sanchez (DR)	8	4	–
Yonghoon Lee (KOR)	9	–	–
Jesus Salud (USA)	10	–	–
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	1	–
Enrique Sanchez (MEX)	–	2	–
Carlos Barreto (VEN)	–	3	–
Bugiarso (INDO)	–	6	–
Serge Poilblan (FRA)	14	7	–
John Johnson (USA)	–	8	5
Victor Llerena (COL)	–	9	1
Bong Chul Kim (KOR)	11	10	–
Kennedy McKinney (USA)	15	–	2
Nurhuda (INDO)	–	–	4
Anell Barotillo (AUSTRL)	–	–	6
Ariston Clayton (USA)	22	–	8
Esteban Morales (COL)	–	–	9
Ernesto Gray (COL)	–	–	10

BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Joichiro Tatsuyoshi (JAP)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Nana Konadu (GHA)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Tim Austin (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Paul Ayala (USA)	1	3	–
Jorge Monsalvo (COL)	2	–	–
Adan Vargas (MEX)	3	–	7
Jose Rafael Sosa (ARG)	4	–	–
Danny Romero (USA)	5	–	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	6	–	5
Victor Rabanales (MEX)	7	–	–
Gerardo Martinez (MEX)	8	12	–
In Jin Chi (KOR)	9	–	–
Masahiko Nakamura (JAP)	10	–	–
Abraham Torres (VEN)	–	1	–
Lukhin CP Gym (THAI)	–	2	–
Daorung C. Siriwat (THAI)	–	4	–
Jose Rojas (VEN)	–	5	–
Yong Hoon Lee (KOR)	–	6	–
Johnny Bredahl (DEN)	12	7	–
Cuauhtemoc Gomez (MEX)	11	8	–
Sahoiu Phaisarn Gym (THA)	–	9	–
Johnny Armour (GB)	22	10	–
Adrian Kaspari (INDO)	–	–	1
Mbulelo Botile (SA)	–	–	2
Jesus Perez (COL)	20	–	3
Juan Sanchez (COL)	–	–	4
Shaszi Nitta (JAP)	–	–	6
Fernando Montilla (PHIL)	–	–	8
Rafael Del Valle (PR)	–	–	9
Ancee Gedeon (USA)	–	–	10

JR. BANTAMWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Gerry Penalosa (PHIL)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Satoshi Iida (JAP)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Johnny Tapia (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Joel Luna Zarate (MEX)	1	6	–
Luis Bolanos (COL)	2	–	–
Veeraphol Sahaprom (THAI)	3	4	–
Luis Benavides (COL)	4	–	12
Alejandro Montiel (MEX)	5	–	–
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	6	–	–
Hipolito Saucedo (USA)	7	–	–
Adonis Cruz (NIC)	8	–	–
In Joo Cho (KOR)	9	11	–
Victor Godoy (ARG)	10	–	–
Julio Gamboa (NIC)	30	1	–
Yokthai Sithoar (THAI)	–	2	–
Dario Azuaga (PAR)	–	3	–
Felix Machado (VEN)	28	5	–
Takato Toguchi (JAP)	–	7	–
Edicson Torres (VEN)	–	8	–
Raffy Montalban (PHIL)	–	9	–
Rodolfo Blanco (COL)	–	10	9

Danny Romero (USA)	–	–	1
Ubadel Soto (COL)	–	–	2
Ratanachai Sor Voraphin (THAI)	12	12	3
Andy Agosto (PR)	–	–	4
Sombak Singchawan (THAI)	–	–	5
Juvenal Berrio (COL)	–	–	6
Jaji Sibali (SA)	–	–	7
Solo Ikeda (JAP)	–	–	8
Joel Luna (MEX)	–	–	10

FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Chatchai Sasakul (THAI)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Jose Bonilla (VEN)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Mark Johnson (USA)	**–**	**–**	**C**
Gabriel Mira (MEX)	1	–	–
Yuri Arbachakov (RUS)	2	3	7
Yong Soon Chang (KOR)	3	–	–
Raul Juarez (MEX)	4	11	–
Arthur Johnson (USA)	5	4	1
David Guerault (FRA)	6	–	12
Manny Pacquiao (PHIL)	7	8	–
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	8	–	8
Isaias Zamudio (USA)	9	–	–
Oscar Arciniega (MEX)	10	–	–
Gilberto Gonzalez (VEN)	–	1	–
Saen Sow Ploenchit (THAI)	–	2	–
Evangelino Perez (PAN)	–	5	–
Denkaosaen Kaowitch (THAI)	–	6	–
Will Grigsby (USA)	18	7	5
Ferid Ben Jeddou (TUN)	–	9	3
Jesper Jensen (DEN)	–	10	–
Vacant	–	–	2
Irene Pacheco (COL)	–	–	4
Yodchingchai Sornthong (THAI)	–	–	6
Ilido Julio (COL)	21	–	9
Luis Cox (PER)	–	–	10

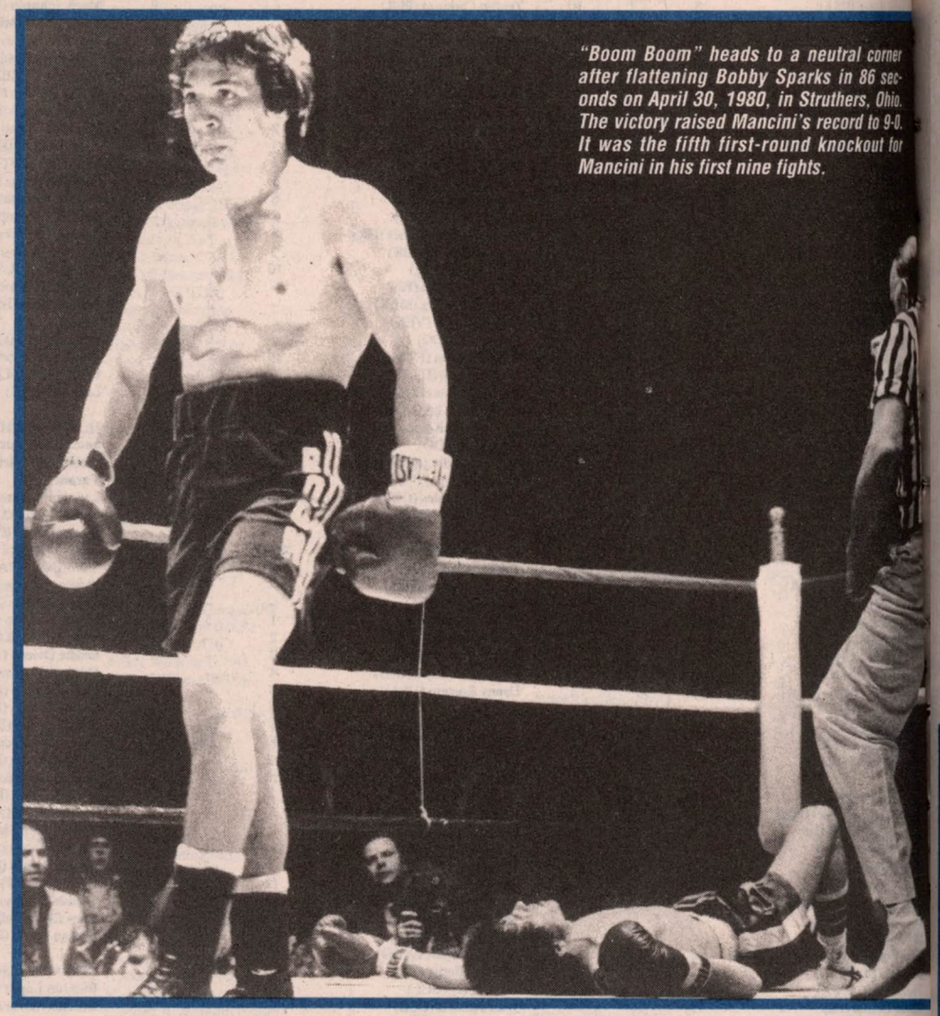
JR. FLYWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Saman Sorjaturong (THAI)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Pichitnoi C. Siriwat (THAI)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Vacant	**–**	**–**	**C**
Ladislao Vazquez (MEX)	1	–	–
Yosam Choi (KOR)	2	12	–
Jona Gamboa (PHIL)	3	2	3
Kaaj Chartbandi (THAI)	4	–	–
Shiro Yahiro (JAP)	5	6	–
Phanieng Sasiprabha (THAI)	6	–	–
Gabriel Munoz (MEX)	7	–	–
Edgar Cardenas (MEX)	8	–	–
Sangik Yang (KOR)	9	–	–
Sandre Oviedo (ARG)	10	–	–
Hadao C.P. Gym (THAI)	–	1	–
Carlos Murillo (PAN)	–	3	11
Suzuki Kabato (JAP)	–	4	–
Yong Jin Kim (KOR)	13	5	–
Hidenobu Honda (JAP)	12	7	–
Nelson Dieppa (DR)	–	8	–
Oswaldo Guerrero (MEX)	–	9	4
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	18	10	–
Anis Roga (INDO)	–	–	1
Manuel Jesus Herrera (DR)	–	–	2
Onewin Chareon (THAI)	–	–	5
Nelson Dieppa (PR)	–	–	6
Gill Ikeda (JAP)	–	–	7
Takashi Shiohama (JAP)	–	–	8
Jesus Chong (MEX)	–	–	9
Hernan Berrio (COL)	–	–	10

STRAWWEIGHTS	WBC	WBA	IBF
Ricardo Lopez (MEX)	**C**	**–**	**–**
Rosendo Alvarez (NIC)	**–**	**C**	**–**
Ratanapol Sow Voraphin (THAI)	**7**	**–**	**C**
Rocky Lin (JAP)	1	1	–
Payak Nakornluang (THAI)	2	–	–
Carmelo Caceres (PHIL)	3	–	8
Lindi Memani (SA)	4	11	–
Mongol Charoen (THAI)	5	–	12
Domingo Guillen (DR)	6	–	–
Myung Sup Park (KOR)	8	–	–
Sang Chul Lee (KOR)	9	–	–
Lee Sandoval (NIC)	10	10	–
Jose Garcia (COL)	–	2	–
Ronnie Magramo (PHIL)	–	3	–
Songkram Porpaoin (THAI)	–	4	–
Satoru Abe (JAP)	–	5	–
Randy Mangubat (PHIL)	–	6	–
Wondee Charoen (THAI)	–	7	–
Kermin Guardia (COL)	–	8	–
Chana Porpaoin (THAI)	–	9	–
Vacant	–	–	1
Andy Tabanas (PHIL)	–	–	2
Faisol Akbar (INDO)	27	–	3
Ala Villamor (PHIL)	–	–	4
Juan Herrera (COL)	–	–	5
Luis Lazarte (ARG)	–	12	6
Boy Ikeda (JAP)	–	–	7
Daniel Reyes (COL)	19	–	9
Carlos Eluaiza (ARG)	–	–	10

RING CLASSIC

HOO-RAY FOR MANCINI

The Son Also Rises ... To The Top



"Boom Boom" heads to a neutral corner after flattening Bobby Sparks in 86 seconds on April 30, 1980, in Struthers, Ohio. The victory raised Mancini's record to 9-0. It was the fifth first-round knockout for Mancini in his first nine fights.

By William Plummer

(Editor's note: This is a condensed version)

On May 8, Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini took the WBA lightweight title from Arturo Frias, who'd won the crown four months earlier and was defending it for the second time. Mancini's victory was not unexpected. In fact, he'd been the 4-1 favorite. What *was* a surprise was the dispatch with which he turned the champion out. The fight went less than one round—with Frias starting fast, making determined use of his greater hand speed and his right lead, even staggering the challenger, which, apparently, only served to pique Boom Boom's interest. In a performance that would have gratified another steel-town pug named Harry Greb, Mancini backed Frias into the ropes and overwhelmed him with two dozen unanswered blows before the referee called things to a halt. Ray Mancini was a young man in a hurry who seemed to have arrived in record time. He has, he has said, "Finally served my one purpose in life. This is it." But his route to the title had a long foreground. Above all, it included an instructive detour with the master, Alexis Arguello.

Arguello, the lightweight champion from Nicaragua, was stripped down to his designer jeans and his brown-and-beige saddle shoes. He was sitting on the apron of the sparring ring in a gym that occupied three convention parlors in Bally's Park Place Casino Hotel in Atlantic City. He swung his legs and chatted with his entourage while awaiting further directions from the CBS Sports people, who wanted something pithy on videotape about the title match with Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini. The fight was just 24 hours away.

"This fight is going to be as tough a one I ever had," he told the camera and the network's blow-by-blow man. "He is 20 and I am 29, but I am in the best condition ... "

Arguello had fought 75 times with just four losses and had stylishly survived the forbidding weather of 16 title bouts. He was tall at 5'10" for the 135-pound class, and he had knockout power in the snap of each wrist. He was a boxer-puncher for whom confidence was a sort of portable climate. Yet this kid from Youngstown, Ohio, with the corny nickname, this "Boom Boom," gave him pause.

"Mancini has a stronger ambition," he admitted to the TV camera. "To give his father something that was taken away from him ... "

Always gracious and never a dummy, Arguello understood his role in the unfolding drama. The fight was being pitched by CBS as "Ray 'Boom Boom' Mancini's Quest for the Title." Mancini was young Galahad, the title was the pilfered Grail, and Arguello was the Dark Knight, two-handed fate itself.

All the puffery notwithstanding, it would take a heart of stone not to be moved by Mancini's story. Even Arguello appeared to be lending himself to the script. Up to a point, of course.

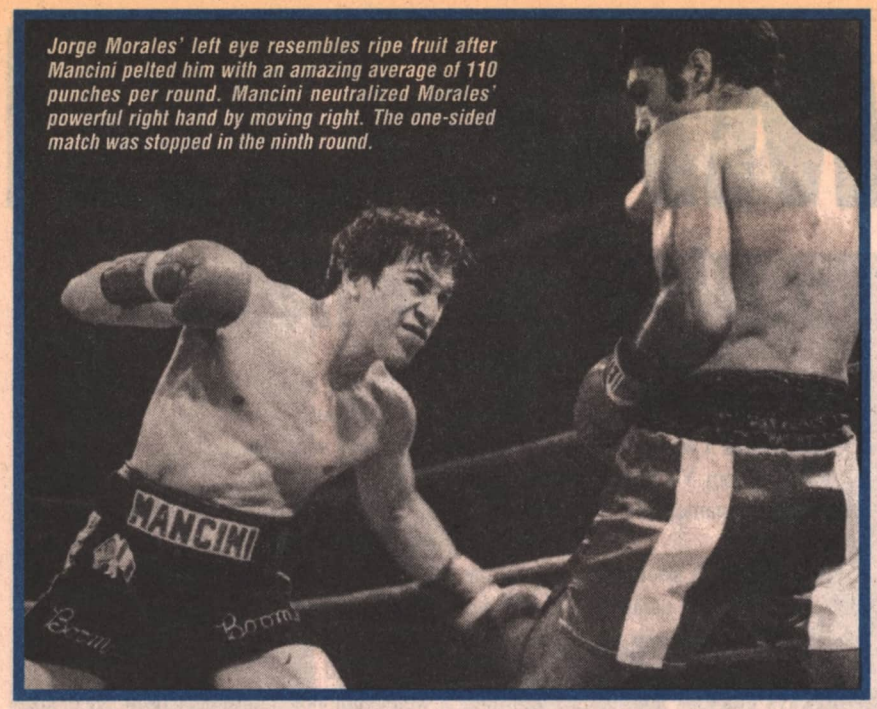
"There was a scrapbook in the attic that was such a precious thing I wasn't supposed to look at it alone," remembered Mancini, sitting one evening a few weeks before the Arguello fight in the Manhattan apartment he'd inherited from former heavyweight contender Duane Bobick. "All the pages were yellow and the clips from the newspapers were crumbling. I must have been five or six, and I used to sneak up to look at it. It didn't matter I couldn't read."

The scrapbook traced the career of the original "Boom Boom," Lenny Mancini, Ray's father, who cut a swath through the lightweight division in the late-'30s and early-'40s, fighting the likes of Charlie Varre, Chief Crazy Horse, and Billy Marquart. Lenny was a 5'2" milling machine, the product of steel-girded Youngstown, Ohio, who did his best work in Brooklyn, where he was awarded his *nom de guerre*. Wrote one boxing enthusiast after a typical Mancini exhibition, "Lenny is a fistic tornado, a young wildcat, and a human dynamo all rolled into one."

In 1941, Lenny fought lightweight champ Sammy Angott in a non-title battle, with Angott taking a decision that was roundly jeered by the audience. Later in the year, after Boom Boom dispatched Dave Castilloux, the reigning Canadian champion, it looked as though Lenny's clamorous fans were going to get the fight they demanded: Mancini vs. Angott, for real this time. Then, on January 15, 1942, while the parties were still negotiating, Lenny received his draft notice from the selective service. No delay for furlough would be possible, said the Army, which was unmoved by Boom Boom's offer to donate his purse to the Allied cause. After a year on the home front, Lenny was sent overseas where in Mentz, on November 11, 1944, he was hit by mortar fire.

Mancini's last real test before facing Alexis Arguello was against Mexican lightweight champ Jose Luis Ramirez. Mancini outboxed Ramirez, beating him easily in a 12-round decision on July 19, 1981. Ramirez had been looking past Mancini, hoping to get a rematch with Arguello.

From THE RING, July 1982



Jorge Morales' left eye resembles ripe fruit after Mancini pelted him with an amazing average of 110 punches per round. Mancini neutralized Morales' powerful right hand by moving right. The one-sided match was stopped in the ninth round.

"They never expected him to live," said Ray. "He has 13 pieces of shrapnel in him. They said he'd be paralyzed from the waist down. So what does he do?"

Ray paused and shook his head in admiration. "He comes back a middleweight in 1946, ready to fight Rocky Graziano. The fight would have been for $27,000 and he never made more than $5,000. But finally Graziano says, 'Hey, I don't need this guy. He's too tough!' The last two years my father fought with double vision. He was fighting two guys at once."

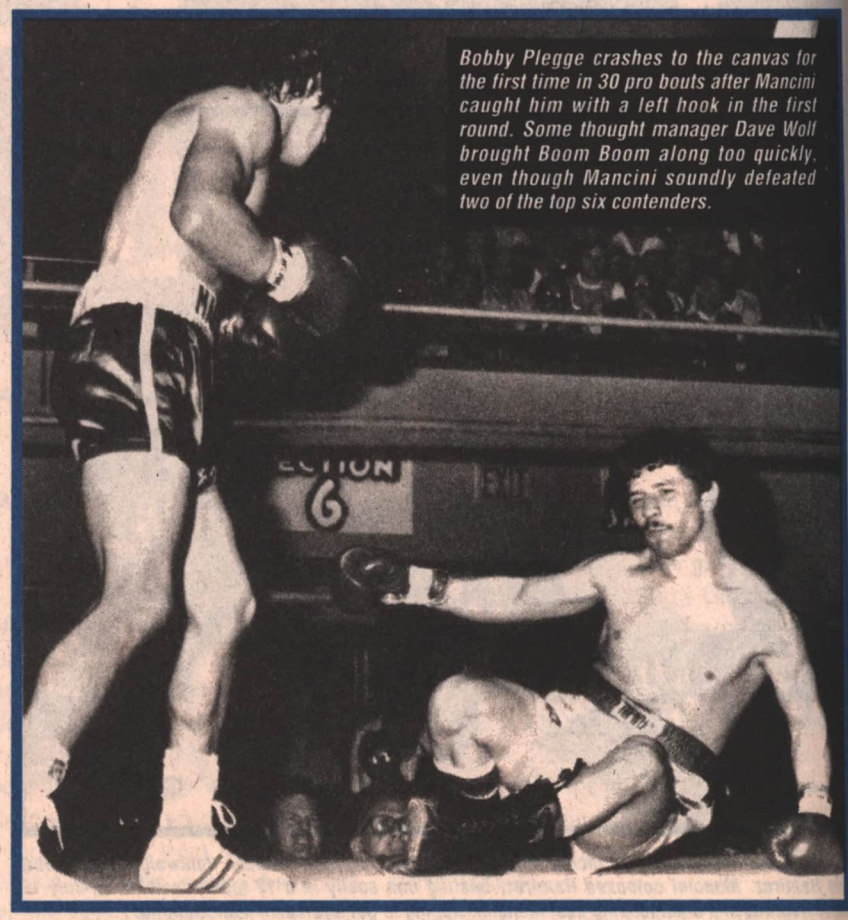
Lenny retired from boxing at age 28. He promptly eloped with his girl, Ellen, and came home to Youngstown to work at General Fireproofing, where he's been for 30 years. Ray came along when Lenny was 42. With the war wounds compounded by age, Lenny was already on a downward physical spiral. A fair athlete herself, Ellen was the one who tossed the ball with the kids in the yard.

For Ray coming of age in Youngstown, there were two Lenny Mancinis. In the world of getting-and-spending, his father was a gimpy, partly blind, decidedly marginal man who labored in a foundry, pushing barges around. But in another, more hospitable realm, Lenny was a king in exile. Everyone in Youngstown called him Boom Boom, the Uncrowned Champ. "You had to see the way people looked at him when we went down the street," remembered Ray. "I used to be amazed at the way people worshipped him."

At age 13, Ray wrote Lenny a Father's Day poem, "I Walk in Your Shadow." Four stanzas long, it is not likely to be widely anthologized, but reading it that day reduced Lenny Mancini to a soggy mess. At age 15, Ray abruptly announced he wanted to start training for the Junior Olympics. He'd intimated an interest, especially when Lenny Jr. trained for the Golden Gloves. But no one was quite prepared for his entry into boxing. It wasn't as if he couldn't do anything else. He was a top student, president of his class at Cardinal Mooney High School, a gifted athlete who lettered in three sports.

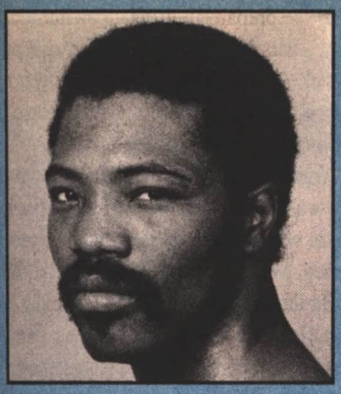
Apparently, no one had read the poem he wrote at age 13 with proper attention, especially the lines, "I want to feel this man's pains, I want to be locked in this man's chains ... and live with his great name." No one saw that Ray meant to actually revive and inhabit Lenny's early life, that he meant to rewrite as comedy the tragic conclusion of the scrapbook in the attic. Sitting in his hand-me-down Manhattan apartment, Ray remembered that for his first fight, he wore his father's trunks and shoes. He remembered his mother asking, with her usual leavening wit, "Gosh, Ray. Do you want me to go up and get the mouthpiece, too?"

The Times Square Gym is located just east of Broadway on 42nd Street, where Mancini meets with the people that look out for him, manager David Wolf and trainer Murphy Griffith. Some "experts" argue that



Bobby Plegge crashes to the canvas for the first time in 30 pro bouts after Mancini caught him with a left hook in the first round. Some thought manager Dave Wolf brought Boom Boom along too quickly, even though Mancini soundly defeated two of the top six contenders.

THE RING RATINGS, July 1982



Aaron Pryor

HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Larry Holmes**, Easton, PA
1. **Mike Weaver**, Los Angeles, CA
2. **Michael Dokes**, Akron, OH
3. **Gerry Cooney**, Huntington, NY
4. **Greg Page**, Louisville, KY
5. **Gerrie Coetzee**, South Africa
6. **Trevor Berbick**, Canada
7. **James Tillis**, Chicago, IL
8. **Randall Cobb**, Philadelphia, PA
9. **Tim Witherspoon**, Philadelphia, PA
10. **Renaldo Snipes**, Yonkers, NY

LIGHT HEAVYWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Dwight Braxton**, Camden, NJ
1. **Michael Spinks**, St. Louis, MO
2. **Matthew Saad Muhammad**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Eddie Mustafa Muhammad**, Brooklyn, NY
4. **Carlos DeLeon**, Puerto Rico
5. **Jerry Celestine**, New Orleans, LA
6. **Murray Sutherland**, Bay City, MI
7. **Marvin Camel**, Missoula, MT
8. **James Scott**, Rahway, NJ
9. **Marvin Johnson**, Indianapolis, IN
10. **Jerry Martin**, Philadelphia, PA

MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Marvin Hagler**, Brockton, MA
1. **Tony Sibson**, England
2. **Frank Fletcher**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Mustafa Hamsho**, Syria
4. **Dwight Davison**, Detroit, MI
5. **Fulgencio Obelmejias**, Venezuela
6. **Thomas Hearns**, Detroit, MI
7. **Ray Seales**, Tacoma, WA
8. **James Green**, Irvington, NJ
9. **Bernard Mays**, Detroit, MI
10. **Alex Ramos**, Bronx, NY

JUNIOR MIDDLEWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Ray Leonard**, Palmer Park, MD
1. **Wilfred Benitez**, Puerto Rico
2. **Ayub Kalule**, Uganda
3. **Tony Ayala Jr.**, San Antonio, TX
4. **Carlos Herrera**, Argentina
5. **Davey Moore**, New York, NY
6. **Charlie Weir**, South Africa
7. **Gary Guiden**, Muncie, IN
8. **Roberto Duran**, Panama
9. **Clint Jackson**, Nashville, TN
10. **James Green**, Irvington, NJ

WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Ray Leonard**, Palmer Park, MD
1. **Thomas Hearns**, Detroit, MI
2. **Roger Stafford**, Philadelphia, PA
3. **Pipino Cuevas**, Mexico
4. **Milton McCrory**, Detroit, MI
5. **Donald Curry**, Ft. Worth, TX
6. **Roberto Duran**, Panama
7. **Colin Jones**, England
8. **Kevin Howard**, Philadelphia, PA
9. **Bobby Joe Young**, Steubenville, OH
10. **Marlon Starling**, Hartford, CT

JUNIOR WELTERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Aaron Pryor**, Cincinatti, OH
1. **Shengsak Muangsurin**, New York, NY
2. **Jo Kimpuani**, France
3. **Dujuan Johnson**, Detroit, MI
4. **Johnny Bumphus**, Nashville, TN
5. **Leroy Haley**, Las Vegas, NV
6. **Miguel Montilla**, Dominican Republic
7. **Steve Hearon**, Houston, TX
8. **Ronnie Shields**, Port Author, TX
9. **Willie Rodriguez**, Allentown, PA
10. **Billy Costello**, Kingston, PA

LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Alexis Arguello**, Nicaragua
1. **Aaron Pryor**, Cincinatti, OH
2. **Ray Mancini**, Youngstown, OH
3. **Andrew Ganigan**, Honolulu, HI
4. **Art Frias**, Los Angeles, CA
5. **Howard Davis Jr.**, Glen Cove, NY
6. **Gonzalo Montellano**, Bakersfield, CA
7. **Hilmer Kenty**, Detroit, MI
8. **Rodolfo Gonzalez**, Mexico
9. **Edwin Viruet**, Jersey City, NJ
10. **Claude Noel**, Trinidad

JUNIOR LIGHTWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Samuel Serrano**, Puerto Rico
1. **Rolando Navarrete**, Honolulu, HI
2. **Cornelius Boza-Edwards**, England
3. **Edwin Rosario**, Puerto Rico
4. **Rafael Limon**, Mexico
5. **Bobby Chacon**, Pacoima, CA
6. **Yasutsune Uehara**, Japan
7. **Johnny Sato**, Stockton, CA
8. **John Verderosa**, Staten Island, NY
9. **Ildelfonso Bethelmy**, Venezuela
10. **Carlos Pinango**, Venezuela

FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Salvador Sanchez**, Mexico
1. **Eusebio Pedroza**, Panama
2. **Wilfredo Gomez**, Puerto Rico
3. **Kiko Bejines**, Mexico
4. **Rocky Lockridge**, Paterson, NJ
5. **Ruben Castillo**, Bakersfield, CA
6. **Mario Miranda**, Colombia
7. **Pat Cowdell**, England
8. **Roberto Rubaldino**, Mexico
9. **Jose Caba**, Dominican Republic
10. **Paul Ferrari**, Australia

JUNIOR FEATHERWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Wilfredo Gomez**, Puerto Rico
1. **Sergio Palma**, Argentina
2. **Mike Ayala**, New York, NY
3. **Jaime Garza**, Los Angeles, CA
4. **Leo Cruz**, Dominican Republic
5. **Ricardo Cardona**, Columbia
6. **Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
7. **Roberto Rubaldino**, Mexico
8. **Juan Meza**, Los Angeles, CA
9. **Soon-Hyun Chung**, Korea
10. **Nicky Perez**, Tucson, AZ

BANTAMWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Jeff Chandler**, Philadelphia, PA
1. **Lupe Pintor**, Mexico
2. **Chul-Ho Kim**, Korea
3. **Kiko Bejines**, Mexico
4. **Albert Davila**, Los Angeles, CA
5. **Oscar Muniz**, Los Angeles, CA
6. **Eijiro Murata**, Japan
7. **Johnny Carter**, Philadelphia, PA
8. **Alberto Davila**, Los Angeles, CA
9. **Jiro Watanabe**, Japan
10. **Freddie Jackson**, Houston, TX

FLYWEIGHTS
World Champ: **Prudencio Cardona**, Colombia
1. **Tadashi Tomori**, Japan
2. **Amado Ursua**, Mexico
3. **Katsuo Tokashiki**, Japan
4. **Santos Laciar**, Argentina
5. **Hilario Zapata**, Panama
6. **Juan Herrera**, Mexico
7. **Antonio Avelar**, Mexico
8. **Hwan Jin Kim**, Korea
9. **Rafael Pedroza**, Panama
10. **Candido Tellez**, Mexico

Wolf has brought this kid along too quickly—this even though Ray soundly defeated the number-six and the number-three contenders in his last two outings. Others are convinced that Mancini is purely a "media creation." The story of Ray and his father strikes them as being suspiciously made-for-TV. It wouldn't be the first time, they say, that Wolf packaged a fighter. A couple of years back, there was Ed "Too Tall" Jones, the all-pro defensive end from the Dallas Cowboys who Wolf showcased on television and who was set ludicrously on his duff in his first fight by a journeyman opponent half his size. To some in the fight establishment,

Wolf is a slick interloper. Indeed, he is a far cry from the managerial stereotype, the gentrified hood with a cigar in his kisser. Urbane, articulate, on the beefy side, Wolf is a former sports editor of *Life* who backed into the game through friendships with Bobick and Joe Frazier. Just entering the gym, he is himself eager to assess Ray over a distance. Today, Boom Boom will go 15 rounds with four different sparring partners.

"Move your head, side to side. Dip, dip, bend those legs," coaches Griffith, as Ray stalks a rangy white fighter. "That's it. Hands close together. Don't lunge, shorten up. Parry. Come with the left. Good."

Griffith is taking Ray through the styles he will need against Arguello. Clearly, he will need to back the champion up, to keep the pressure up so Arguello's back will be ribboned with rope burns. Unlike Arguello, Mancini lacks the height and leverage to possess a true "equalizer." At 5'5", with a torso that vees like a flight of geese, Ray is a stiff bodypuncher whose cumulative blows tend to sicken an opponent, make him hinge at the middle, and offer his chin as a gift. Which is precisely what Ray's second sparring partner does. Mercifully, Ray carries the kid.

By the time training camp—which will move to Grossinger's, the resort in the Catskill Mountains—is concluded, Boom Boom will have done the following: forced the lightweight champion of the Dominican Republic to bow out with a pair of broken ribs; sent packing a twice-Golden Gloves victor from Ann Arbor after just three days work; required his most reliable target, a game kid from Mexico, to take to wearing a ply of foam rubber around his tender middle; so benighted another partner at the eyes he will resemble a raccoon. In short, he will put a sizable smile to Wolf's lips. "The fighter Ray was as an amateur," said Wolf, during a free moment at the camp in the Catskill Mountains, "bears only the slightest resemblance of the fighter he is now. He was not a devastating puncher. He was a face-first fighter, very easy to hit.

"We discovered Ray at the National Golden Gloves in 1979. I sent Griff out to Indianapolis and he called me the first day. He said he found 'a little Rocky Marciano.' He tabbed Ray the best prospect out there, better than Marvis Frazier, Tony Tucker. Griff saw things in Ray that most people didn't know existed. He saw that he was effectively aggressive without really knowing what he was doing."

Through Wolf's thoughtful matchmaking and patient courtship of the WBC, Ray climbed steadily in the rankings. By the time he had 18 fights, he was rated among the world's top 10 lightweights. He was ready, on May 16, 1981, for a large step up in class—a fight with the WBC's sixth-rated Jorge "Kid Dynamita" Morales, a brawler with a 32-7-2 record. The fight turned out to be one-sided. The referee stopped matters in the ninth.

Next was Jose Luis Ramirez, the third-ranked contender from Mexico. A lethal puncher whose 53-2 record included 47 knockouts, Ramirez was looking past Mancini to a rematch with Arguello, who had recently taken a controversial decision from him. Wolf leveraged Arguello's name onto a contract to take on the winner of the fight. Put simply, Boom Boom came to box. Each time Ramirez uncoiled, he found that Ray had come and scored, and was gone.

After the ninth round of what was clearly a shutout, Griffith leaned in from the corner and marveled at his fighter. "Where did you learn to fight like that?" he asked. "From you," answered Boom Boom.

***

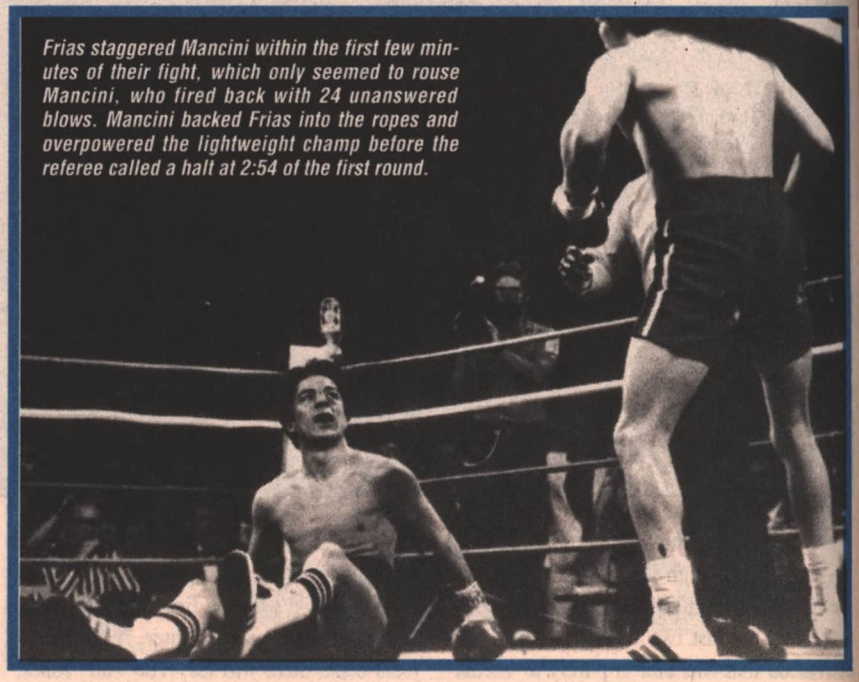
Saturday, October 3, 4:30 p.m. There may have been an Arguello fan or two among the 2,200 crushed into the Bally Hotel ballroom-*cum*-arena. But he, or they, widely embraced anonymity. The makeshift stands, which rose to the ceiling, were filled with adrenalized folk from Ohio—many of whom wore red and green T-shirts bearing Boom Boom's likeness.

In the third round, Mancini started jabbing with conviction and raised a punch beneath Arguello's left eye. But he was operating at a distance, letting Alexis circle him, and spear down at his bobbing head.

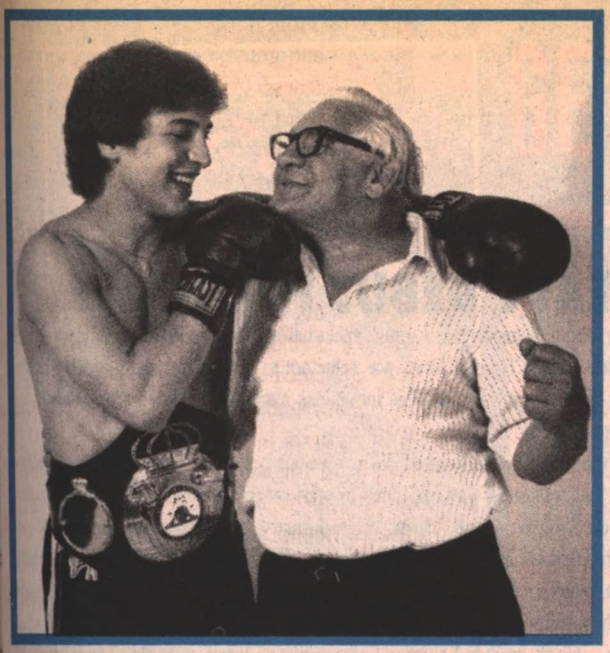
Arguello was clearly back in the seventh. Ray was not boring in as he had been and Alexis was finding his head with greater frequency. Mancini was getting into bad habits.

By the eighth, sweat was cascading down both fighters and Mancini was pedaling backward for maybe the first time in his career. In the ninth, several choruses of "Boom Boom" issued from the audience. It encouraged the fighter. Abruptly, Ray was coming at Arguello like a revolving door off its stanchion. Then, just before the bell, he accidentally butted the champion. Mid-mayhem, Arguello rose up, dropped his guard, and felt his eye for damage. A more experienced fighter would have seized the moment to knock his opponent senseless. But Ray, too well-bred, was stricken by the mishap. Even as Wolf and Griffith were near apoplexy in the corner, screaming for him to capitalize, Boom Boom just stood there as if wishing somehow to help.

With the 11th round, the fight entered what is called "the championship distance," a space that is decorated with monuments to Arguello. No longer saving his right hand, but using it with impunity, Arguello caught



Frias staggered Mancini within the first few minutes of their fight, which only seemed to rouse Mancini, who fired back with 24 unanswered blows. Mancini backed Frias into the ropes and overpowered the lightweight champ before the referee called a halt at 2:54 of the first round.



Mancini's main inspiration throughout his speedy climb was his father, Lenny Mancini, the original "Boom Boom." Lenny was denied a title shot with Sammy Angott because he was drafted in 1942. The elder Mancini was wounded in 1944, yet came back to box as a middleweight.

Mancini coming in and Ray's knees hit the canvas for the first time in his career. With the bell, Boom Boom lunged toward his corner where he genuflected on the ropes.

It was a testament to his superb conditioning that Ray lasted the next two rounds. Toward the middle of the 13th—with Ray's mouth showing an angry cut—Dave Wolf could be seen rising up ready to throw a towel into the ring. Then, a matter of seconds into the 14th round, Alexis caught Ray with a left hook behind the ear and his arms shot out like a scarecrow's. Trying desperately to embrace Alexis, Ray was boosted by an uppercut to the solar plexus and knocked stupid into the ropes by a right hand before the referee could intercede.

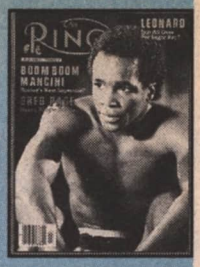
In the joint press conference after the fight, Arguello called it the fight of the year. Ever gracious, he turned to Boom Boom and said, "I'm sorry for you, Ray. But it was my job." He attributed the victory to his experience and reminded Ray that he, too, lost his first title fight. "This fight is better than all the fights you have," he said. "From now on, you have it in your heart."

Licking intermittently at his mouth, Ellen and Lenny sitting beside him, Ray addressed the 50-odd people in the room: "What can I say? Alexis Arguello is a super fighter. It would have been a helluva upset, right?"

He laughed, then grew to his major concern: "Fifteen rounds can seem like a lifetime. I wanted it bad for my father, you see. That's going to hurt me a lot later … I'm sorry if I'm not acting professional."

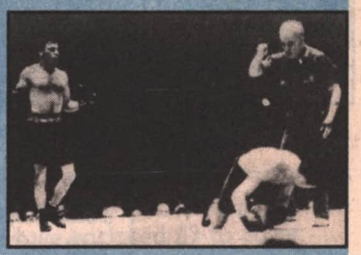
On December 26, Ray fought an Aztec Jack Palance named Manuel Abedoy. He stopped the Mexican in one of those delayed-reaction knockouts in the second round. Following the Abedoy fight, a sportswriter had asked Wolf whether he was sorry he hadn't waited longer to match Mancini with Arguello. "Ask my father how many title shots you get," Ray interrupted, fielding the question himself. "When you get one, you take it." ■

THE RING, July 1982



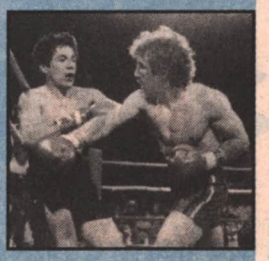
The Cover: THE RING speculates about the possible retirement of Sugar Ray Leonard. The world welterweight champ underwent surgery to have a detached retina in his left eye repaired six days before his scheduled title fight with Roger Stafford. "His eye isn't ever going to be as good as God made it," cautioned Ferdie Pacheco.

Page Out Of Ali's Book: Greg Page, a Louisville, Kentucky, native, is thought to be the next Ali. THE RING explores the haggling that is going on between Don King, with whom Page had just signed, and Butch Lewis, Page's original promoter. Feeling King had lured Page away from him, Lewis signed Tony Tubbs, who would beat Page in a 15-round decision to win the WBA title in 1985.



The Roman Warrior: THE RING looks back at two-time lightweight champion Tony Canzoneri, a fight fan's fighter. The story recalls "Canzi" as having the quickness of a cat and the ability to pinpoint his straight right with unbelievable precision. If Canzi had a fault, it was cockiness. A boxer-puncher, Canzoneri tried to outbox the boxers and outslug the sluggers. Canzoneri kayoed Jack "Kid" Berg in the third round of his second title defense (pictured) on April 24, 1931.

Silent But Deadly: Eugene "Silent" Hairston is remembered in "Where Are They Now?" as a middleweight contender in the 1950s whom many champions avoided. He was also deaf—a case of spinal meningitis when he was two took most of his hearing. He retired from boxing at 22 with a record of 43-15-5 (24), and in 1982, he was living comfortably with his wife and making plans for a Eugene Hairston Boxing Club.



Fighter Of The Month: Ray "Boom Boom" Mancini is all over this issue. Seven months after suffering a 14th-round knockout at the hands of Alexis Arguello, the slugger from Youngstown, Ohio, wins the WBA lightweight championship from Art Frias with a first-round kayo.

LOOKING AHEAD

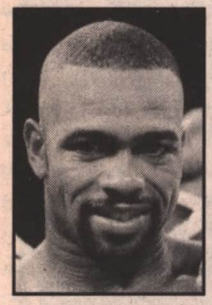
By Eric Raskin

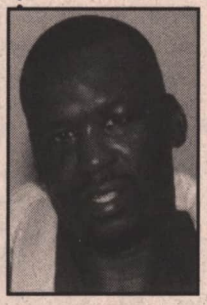
BLOCK-"BUSTER" HEAVY DEBUT FOR JONES

Ever since **Roy Jones** shellacked **Montell Griffin** in their rematch last August, speculation over the WBC light heavyweight champ's next challenge has been one of boxing's hottest topics. Though Jones was reluctant to confirm anything, the belief was that the only fights worthy of Jones' attention were at heavyweight, and that his move was impending. As we went to press, the rumors finally were on the verge of becoming a reality.

Top Rank publicist **Lee Samuels** disclosed that the details were worked out for a bout between Jones and former heavyweight champion **James "Buster" Douglas**, and all that remained was for Jones to sign on the dotted line. Jones' promoter, **Murad Muhammad**, met with Douglas' promoter, Top Rank boss **Bob Arum**, in late-January, and a handshake agreement had been reached for a May 2 fight in Atlantic City. It is expected that the fight will be televised on HBO's pay-per-view affiliate, TVKO, and a Jones victory will all but assure him of even bigger future heavyweight fights on pay-per-view. Though nothing is certain until Jones' name is on the fight contract, Douglas appears to have won the derby—which included former light heavy and heavyweight champ **Michael Moorer**—by virtue of his name recognition and unbeaten record since his return in 1996.

"It's a fascinating fight," said Arum. "I'm hoping Buster can win, but Jones is a very good athlete."

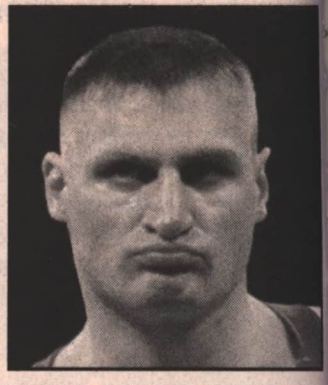




Jones vs. Douglas: Almost a done deal

LISTEN UP

Mixing and matching the welterweights who fought on last October's HBO-televised card at Foxwoods Casino, **Ike Quartey** will defend the WBA title against **Pernell Whitaker**, with **Jose Luis Lopez** meeting **Andrei Pestriaev** in the co-feature. According to **Main Events** matchmaker **Carl Moretti**, the fights are set for either April 18 or 25, most likely in Las Vegas ... Main Events also has planned the return of **Andrew Golota** on a USA *Tuesday Night Fights* show in April. No opponent had been named at press time, but Moretti said it would likely be "nobody of great note" ... Golota's conqueror, WBC heavyweight champion **Lennox Lewis**, appears to have an active year planned. Assuming he gets by **Shannon Briggs** on March 28, Lewis is eyeballing another fight in May against an attractive opponent before what Moretti referred to as "the dreaded mandatory" against Croatian **Zeljko Mavrovic** in Europe in July ... Arguably the top three young heavies, **Michael Grant**, **Chris Byrd**, and **David Tua**, will all be featured on a May HBO *Boxing After Dark* show—in separate bouts ... Inactive since October 4, top junior lightweight prospect **Jesus Chavez** should be back in action soon. Still in Mexico after being deported as a result of an armed robbery conviction in 1990, Chavez was expected at press time to take one tuneup fight south of the border. "I'd look for him to be back in the States by May," Moretti said ... **Don King** has a middleweight twin bill planned for April 3 in Montreal, with Canadian contenders **Stephane Ouelette** and **Davey Hilton** squaring off in support of **Keith Holmes'** WBC title defense against **Hassine Cherifi** ... Wondering why IBF bantamweight champion **Tim Austin** has been out of action so long? **Mbulelo Botile** broke Austin's jaw in their July 1997 fight, and the jaw didn't set right the first time around. As a result, the jaw had to be rebroken and reset. According to **Bobby Goodman** of Don King Promotions, Austin should be set to make a mandatory defense over the summer and will take one fight before then.



Golota: Returns to action in April

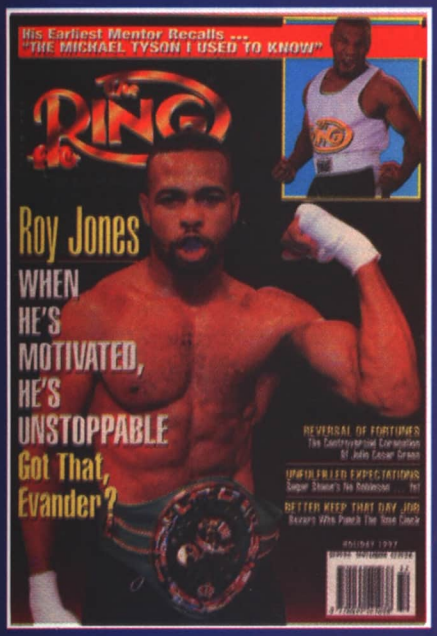
FUTURE FIGHTS

By Art Manteris

VP/Director of Race and Sports Operations Las Vegas Hilton SuperBook

Favorite	Underdog	Odds	The Skinny
Angel Manfredy	Naseem Hamed	7-5	Hamed can't beat top 130-pounders
Oscar De La Hoya	Yory Boy Campas	15-1	No problem for Oscar
Roy Jones	Buster Douglas	Pick-'em	I like the big man's chances
Michael Grant	David Tua	7-5	Very good matchup
Terry Norris	David Reid	7-5	Reid is not quite ready yet

Las Vegas Hilton



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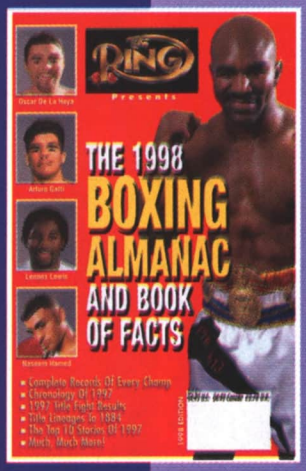

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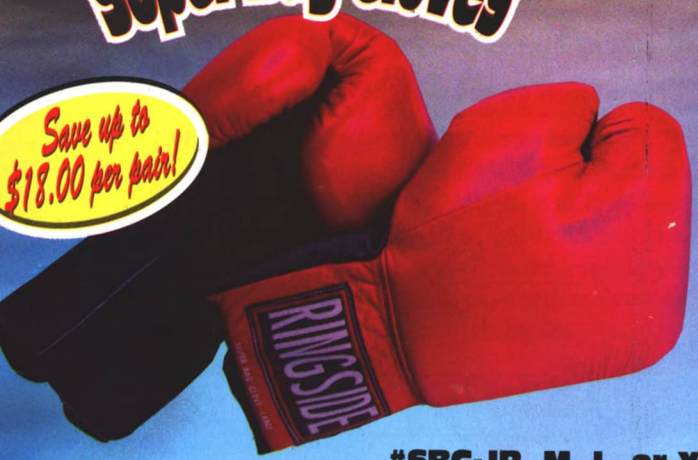

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